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FRESH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

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THE PLAIN MESSAGE EFFECTIVE. 201

Matt. 10: 20; John 13: 20; 1 Cor. 1: 17.

A prominent clergyman in Boston, some years ago, had a plain spoken country pastor visit him, and he invited him to address his people at their mid-week meeting in their chapel. The visiting preacher was so plain and straight-spoken in his mode of speech, and in the homely illustrations used by him, that the Boston pastor was quite disturbed fearing that his cultivated congregation would take offense at the sharp thrusts of the unconventional brother. But a few days later, a prominent member of the congregation came to his pastor in great trouble of soul, earnestly desiring to be shown the way to Christ; when asked as to the cause of his interest, he referred to the homely words of the country preacher, who had evidently spoken straight to the heart of this man. When the pastor told the story to a friend, he said: "I'll never again distrust God's spirit in the guiding of God's servants as his preachers. I had written more than one sermon for the express purpose of reaching that one man in my congregation; but here he was reached by one plain sentence from a plain man whom God's spirit guided."

SOILING THE ATMOSPHERE. 202

Eph. 4: 29; Luke 6: 45; Job 38: 2.

The Pacific coast octopus or devil-fish can hide itself by clouding the water about it. It has been found that an octopus only a few inches long can cloud fifty cubic feet of water in a few seconds. The power of the squid in surrounding itself with a cloud of inky water is well known. In an experiment with a large squid in Washington recently a tank containing 320 cubic feet of water was made opaque in a few seconds by a single squid. A man of impure conversation is like one of those creatures. He can soil the atmosphere in the whole social circle. He may not really say anything vile, but he can suggest by word what will fill the air with evil thoughts.

THE BEST GIFT OF ALL. 203

2 Cor. 12: 14, 15; Mal. 4: 6; 3 John 4.

A mother who has been very successful in rearing her children, recently said: "When my children were young I thought the very best thing I could do for them was to give them myself, so I spared no pains to talk with them, to read to them, to teach them, to pray with them, to be a loving companion and friend to my children. I had to neglect my house often. I had no time to indulge myself in many things which I should have liked to do. I was so busy adorning their minds and cultivating their hearts' best affections that I could not adorn their bodies in fine clothes, though I kept them neat and comfortable at all times. I have my reward now. My sons are ministers of the Gospel; my grown-up daughter a Christian woman. I have plenty of time now to sit down and rest, plenty of time to keep my house in order, plenty of time to indulge myself, besides going about my Master's business wherever he has need of me. I have a thousand beautiful memories of their childhood to comfort me. Now that they have gone out into the world I have the sweet consciousness of having done all that I could to make them ready for whatever work God calls them to do." How terribly cheated any mother is who throws away that kind of success to indulge in fashionable frivolities!

PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE. 204

Isa. 42: 3; Heb. 12: 12, 13; Rom. 14: 13, 19.

George Eliot once said, with that rare insight which was a characteristic of her great genius, that when the conscience of the race is developed, we shall run as eagerly to prevent a man's or a woman's fall as we would to save a beautiful mantelpiece ornament in danger of coming to the ground and being dashed to pieces. That will be when the constraining love of Christ has had its way in the hearts of His people. It is far better to use patience and loving sympathy to prevent men and women from falling into sin, than in rescuing them after they are already fallen. We should be on the alert to steady the tempted soul.

THE MEANING OF LIFE. 205

Mark 6: 3; Luke 22: 27; Rom. 12: 16 (R. V.); Matt. 11: 29.

Some poet whose name I do not know, sings with clear insight of the necessity of our finding the lessons which God would teach us by the dull days and the hard experiences. He says:

What is the meaning of my daily life,
Its drudgery, its endless, petty strife?
O deadly certainty of common things!
O hours with heavy, heavy lagging wings!
Do thou, O Carpenter of Galilee,
Teach me Thy secrets; let me learn of Thee;
Send visions of those days when Thou didst share
The lot of working man, his trials bear.
Help me to feel that Thou dost work with me
In earthly tasks, in heavenly I with Thee;
And yet, dear Lord, with Thee is always heaven,
I see my common lot hath blessed leaven.

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE. 206

Acts 20: 35; John 4: 34; 12: 27.

The language of love is not getting, but giving. Mr. Robert E. Spear relates a beautiful incident illustrative of the love for Christ and mankind, a love that finds its true expression in self-sacrifice: A missionary family was returning recently, after a rest in America, to the work in Tabriz, Persia. As the little party came to the crest of the hills that shut the great plains of Tabriz off from the Aras river and Mt. Ararat and Russia to the north, its members stopped to look across the gray plain, to the gray city and the great red rocky hills beyond, which gather up the sun and fling it down like javelins into the city. It was a dreary sight after the green fields of home, and one of the little girls at last looked up into her mother's face, and said: "It's not nearly so nice as America, mother, is it?" "No, my child," the mother replied; "that's why we've come." There was love in those hearts, and so there was loving service in those lives. That is love's way of showing itself, and of being love.

A HEROIC SPIRIT. 207

Matt. 28: 10.

A ten-year-old boy, whose legs were recently cut off by a train of cars at Dubuque, Iowa, was too plucky to make any fuss over the accident. When the little fellow was taken home his legs hung limp, but he did not complain. Not a tear stood in his eyes, but the tender look he gave to those who stood by his side told plainly that he was suffering great agony. After the doctor dressed his wounds he called his parents, sisters and brothers to his bedside, and kissed them farewell. A second time he called his mother to his side, placed his little arms about her neck and said: "Mother, I am going to die in a few minutes. Please forgive me for not minding you." With this the boy fell back, and as the mother said, "Yes, my angel," and took another look at his face, she found him dead and beyond all pain and suffering. It is a great mistake for ministers and Sunday-school teachers and other Christian workers to neglect the bringing to definite religious decision young heroes like that. The greatest field for modern Christianity is among the children.

SHINING FOR CHRIST. 208

Matt. 5: 16; Gal. 6: 10; Dan. 12: 3.

Elsie Lyle took a journey by rail. As the train was starting her pastor said to her: "I am glad you have a holiday and travelling will give you a good opportunity to shine for Jesus." She wondered how in a railway carriage she could do anything for Jesus. In front of her was a poor woman with three ragged, untidy children. They did not look very inviting, but she said: "I am one of Christ's disciples and I must be careful how I treat one of his little ones." She read to them and gave them some of her lunch and was so occupied in entertaining them that she came to the end of her journey before she realized it. When she reviewed the day's work she said to herself: "Mr. Wardwell said travelling gave good opportunity to shine for Jesus and I have not spoken a word for Christ all day." A few days later Mr. Wardwell said to her: "Mr. Smith, the lawyer, who sat on the opposite side of the carriage you travelled in the other day, says he wishes to become a Christian. He said: 'I travelled lately with Elsie Lyle, who had just confessed her love for Christ, and

for a half-day she proved an angel of mercy to a wornout mother and three fretful children and never appeared to think of herself for a moment. What the Spirit of Christ has done for her I want done for me.' And the best of it all is, Elsie, he is now a Christian and your shining face led him to Christ."

SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE. 209

Phil. 4: 11; Prov. 17: 27; 1 Pet. 3: 4.

"I may not have achieved anything great in my life," said a woman the other day, "but I have brought up two daughters who never talk about their pains and aches." "Maybe they haven't any," ventured one of those women who "enjoys poor health." "Oh, I fancy they have their share," resumed the first woman, placidly. "One has enormous dentist's bills and they are documentary evidence of a certain amount of suffering, don't you think? The other is anything but robust, but she is seldom ill, because she takes care of her health, instead of talking about it. I don't think I have been an unsympathetic mother, but when my girls got old enough to talk about headaches and toothaches and ailments, real, or imaginary, I made up my mind to discourage it at once. We are a busy family, and there is seldom an hour of dreaming for the girls. They had plenty of pleasure, but it was active and jolly rather than leisurely." Undoubtedly that woman had discovered one of the secrets of health and enjoyment. A life that is aggressively active and earnest will escape many of the ills that sluggish, indolent flesh is heir to.

THE COMMON PATH. 210

Luke 9: 23; John 17: 15; James 1: 27.

Most of us are tempted to wait for some great occasion in which to give ourselves in heroic sacrifice for the world's blessing. But it is not to such emergencies we are usually called. It is in the common highway of human experience, in ordinary shop, or street, or home we have our chance to be heroes. The British Weekly recently quoted a stray poem clearly enforcing this truth:

Not on some lone and lofty hill apart
Did Christ the Saviour render up His heart
For man upon the cross of love and woe;
But by the common road where to and fro
The passers went upon their daily ways
And, pausing, pierced Him with indifferent gaze.
And still the crosses by life's highways rise
Beneath the blinding glare of noonday skies;
Still with the wrestling spirit's anguished cry
Blends the light mockery of the passer by.
While scorners, gathered at the martyr's feet,
With railing tongues the olden taunts repeat.
We may not go apart to give our life,
For men in some supernal, mystic strife.
Beside the common paths of earth doth love
Look from its cross to the still heavens above.

OPPORTUNITY MEASURED BY CHARACTER. 211

1 Kings 20: 40; John 4: 35; 2 Cor. 6: 2.

Edward Munford says that it is the character that makes the success, not the opportunity. Mr. Munford was recently sunning himself in his back yard where the household cat had been spending hours every day in front of a rat-hole leading to the stable next door. From her patience, her cautiousness, her strategy, you would have thought that her one ambition in life was to catch a rat, that she planned for him all day, and dreamed of him all night, and knew just what to do with him when she found him. On the morning in question, Munford saw a large rat balancing himself in the sun on the edge of a pail in the yard, the very picture of content. He watched him for some time, as he sipped the water, and daintily sprinkled and brushed himself, and thought how fortunate it would be if only the cat could see him; when lo! at that very moment of fortune, the cat appeared. She was still hungry for rats. She gazed awhile at the hole; then she sauntered towards the pail and the still unconscious rat. She was almost touching him before she saw him. There, at length, was the golden opportunity, the flood-tide of success! One spring, a shake or two, and he would be hers! Would he? She put out her nose and smelt him, within an inch—once, twice, the third time—but the rat was gone. Then Munford wrote down the moral: "It is not always he who has learned not to waste opportunity to whom the opportunity is given." How many there are who smell around their opportunities until they are beyond their reach. There are very many things about which the Scripture is true: "Today is the day of salvation."

A FATAL BLUNDER. 212

Matt. 12: 36; Heb. 12: 17; Deut. 3: 26.

An elderly gentleman recently told the story of how, when he was a young man, he was, on one occasion out with a party camping. They were mostly young fellows, but one or two were middle aged men. One evening as they sat around the fire telling stories, a story

that one of the older men told suggested a vulgar comment, which he gave utterance to before he thought twice. He could have bitten his tongue off the next instant. The older man simply looked straight at him for a moment across the fire, and he knew that he was judged by that remark. After a year or two had passed, the young man's name was mentioned for a position which was very desirable and which he seemed likely to secure, but the man who had been disgusted at his vulgar comment was one of the three to decide it, and at his suggestion the young man was defeated. He afterwards found other work and made a fair success of life, but he regretted as long as he lived giving utterance to that one vulgar, impure comment. The story is a striking illustration of Christ's word, "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

HEAVEN. 213

John 14: 2; Rev. 7: 16, 17.

There is much pathos in a little story telling of the meeting of Wilberforce, the great Christian statesman and reformer, and Robert Hall, the eminent English divine. In the course of their conversation, Hall said to Wilberforce: "What is your idea of Heaven?" To this Wilberfore replied: "Love, Mr. Hall; love, love. And what is yours?" And Hall answered: "My idea of Heaven is rest, rest." Both men evidently spoke at that moment out of the fullness of their nature—the large, loving heart of Wilberforce, which sighed for a larger and more expansive world; and the poor, wretched, racked body of Hall, which never knew, for long years, a day's liberation from pain. Heaven will be the satisfaction of all the soul's need.

OLD MEN FOR COUNSEL. 214

Ps. 92: 14; Prov. 16: 31.

A recent writer discussing the great demand in some quarters for young men in the ministry tells this story: Out in Arizona a man came from the East to see a friend who was living on a ranch. After dinner they walked out to look at the ranchman's territorial possessions. A cloud came up, and the man from the East said: "It is going to rain; we ought to have brought our umbrellas." The old settler replied: "Yes, it may rain, it may rain, but I've lived here fifteen years, and it has never rained yet." It did not rain. So the writer in question says the old settlers know this world the best. He thinks there is something out of joint with the times when gray hairs are not wanted. In time of war young men were more in demand than older men, but war means that the times are out of joint. A young man moves quicker with his body, an older man with his mind. Therefore, when older men are rejected, it is a sign that we are chasing too hard after the things of the body, that civilization is becoming too material, mercenary, less intellectual and spiritual. It ought to be remarked in connection with this that the character of the old man has a good deal to do with it. Men who keep green-hearted and fresh-minded like Gladstone are never thrust aside because they have crossed the dead line of old age. If a man shrinks up and withers as he gets old he will not be desired, but if he lives so as to fulfil the psalmist's promise of fruit bearing in old age, there will be plenty of people to pluck the fruit and enjoy it.

THE LION KILLER SLAIN. 215

Judges 16: 20; James 1: 15.

Mr. Lloyd Mifflin, in his latest book, "The Fields of Dawn," has a very beautiful poem which tells the story of Samson's youthful triumphs and later overthrow, with true spiritual insight.

Bent upon love, and beautiful as day,
Samson the youth to Timnath passed along;
Musing of her, he hummed a desert song,—
When lo! a lion barred his onward way.
Who would be victor in the unequal fray?
He thought of love, and laughed that he was strong,
And conquered. Little did he deem, ere long,
That lion Passion him would heartless slay.
How many a man in youth's supremest hour
Who fells the lions in his path, will find
Some dread Delilah, as the years entice;
Shorn of his will and of his pristine power,
He—following the primrose path of vice—
Falls with the falling temple of his mind!

BEWARE OF LITTLE DEFECTS. 216

James 3: 4; Gal. 5: 9; Luke 16: 10.

Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst recalls the old story of a steamer that went upon the rocks and was wrecked. No storm was prevailing at the time, and the wonder was, how the captain, who was a skilled and experienced officer, could have been careless enough to let his boat get so far from her course. The captain himself was as much surprised as anybody. The compass box was not broken and the needle seemed to be all right, but upon

examining the box, he discovered a little black bit of something that looked like the point of a steel knife blade. He remembered then that one of the sailors had cleaned the compass box the day before, and calling him, he asked him about it. The sailor said he remembered cleaning it, and said that while cleaning it he discovered a bit of rust, or something of the sort, which he tried to rub off, and as that did not succeed, he took out his knife and scraped it off, breaking off a bit of the point of the blade in the process. That bit of blade had done all the mischief. It was exceedingly small, but it had been left in the box, and was large enough to affect the needle, and to draw it far enough away from its true direction to mislead the man at the wheel and to be the cause of the boat's rushing upon the rocks, to the destruction of the boat and to the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of property. This story illustrates, in a way which any one can understand, that the size of a thing is no correct measure of its importance. That bit of steel was not a quarter of an inch long, but it wrecked a vessel that was three hundred feet long. The knife that it was broken off from was not worth fifty cents, but it destroyed a vessel that was worth five hundred thousand dollars. Beware of little sins. A little leaven can leaven the whole lump of life with evil just as surely as with good. A little deviation from the right course in the long voyage may make all the difference between a safe harbor and a wreckage on the rocks.

A TASTE FOR BENEVOLENCE. 217

Prov. 22: 6.

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, who has given millions of dollars for the support of educational and Christian institutions, recently made an address to his son's Bible class in New York City, on the subject of giving, in which he related this story: "When I was fourteen or fifteen years old," said Mr. Rockefeller, "I did all I could to help a little parish pay off a debt of about two thousand dollars on a church to which I belonged. It was one of the keenest pleasures of my life. It was there that I acquired the taste for giving and for influencing others to give." It is a great thing to acquire the taste for helpfulness in youth. It will grow until the great joy of life will come from bestowing blessings on others.

A FORCEFUL CHARACTER. 218

Esther 5: 2; 2 Kings 5: 9-11; Matt. 22: 12.

A writer in the London Daily News says, that an exacting ideal of etiquette was always maintained at the English court during the reign of Queen Victoria, but it was not always so exacting as in the early years of her reign, when, after dinner at Windsor, the royalties stood together on the rug in front of the fire, a station which none dared hold but they. An amusing story is told how when Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton first dined with the Queen, he strolled about the drawing room afterwards so freely that Her Majesty whispered in agitation, "If you don't do something to attract his attention, in another minute he'll be on the rug!" There are characters so rugged and earnest that nothing can keep them off the royal rug of power and influence.

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT. 219

1 Cor. 1: 27; 2: 5.

Mr. Spurgeon relates the story of how he once preached what in his judgment was one of his poorest sermons. He stammered and floundered and when he got through felt that it had been a complete failure. He was greatly humiliated and when he got home he fell on his knees and said, "Lord, God, Thou canst do something with nothing, bless that poor sermon." And all through the week he would utter that prayer. He would wake up in the night and pray about it. He determined that the next Sunday he would redeem himself by preaching a great sermon. Sure enough the next Sunday the sermon went off beautifully. At the close, the people crowded about him and covered him with praise. Spurgeon went home pleased with himself, and that night he slept like a baby. But he said to himself, "I'll watch the results of those two sermons." What were they? From the one that had seemed a failure he was able to trace forty-one conversions. And from that magnificent sermon he was unable to discover that a single soul was saved. Spurgeon's explanation was that the Spirit of God used the one and did not use the other. We can do nothing without the Spirit which "helpeth our infirmities."

A THANKFUL HEART. 220

Luke 12: 15; Phil. 4: 11; 1 Tim. 6: 6-10.

A grateful heart can take all the bitterness out of poverty, and the lack of it can rob wealth and luxury of the power to bless. Some poet sings of it very truly.

Some murmur when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light—
One ray of God's good mercy—gild
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied;
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has, in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

THE POWER OF TRUE HUMILITY. 221

1 Cor. 1: 27-31; John 1: 23; 3: 29; 2 Cor. 12: 9.

Someone asked St. Francis of Assisi why he was so influential, and had so much power with the people. "Well," replied St. Francis, "I've been thinking about that myself lately, and this is why: The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the earth and said: Where can I find the weakest, the littlest, the meanest man on the face of the earth? Then he saw me, and said, I've found him, and now I'll work through him. He won't be proud of it. He'll see that I am only using him because of his littleness and insignificance." When we are willing to be only the vessel which holds the mercies of God for our fellow men God will fill us full of blessings for them.

TAKING CARE OF JEWELS. 222

1 Thess. 2: 19; Dan. 12: 3; Rev. 3: 11.

There is a woman in New York City who has made herself famous and invaluable among the wives of the millionaires by taking care of their jewelry. This is no small charge nor a slight responsibility when in the season hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of diamonds, pearls and elaborate ornaments of other precious gems must be kept in condition for use. Very naturally the women who employ this expert jewel cleaner pay her a fancy price for her services, for she carries a large insurance on her honesty and is very well aware that such a profession as hers is only followed by one who possesses a unique knowledge of precious stones. The pastor, the Sunday-school teacher and the parent occupy in the spiritual realm the position of caretaker over priceless jewels. How carefully they should study the characteristics of these immortal gems, and with what a keen sense of responsibility they should watch over them!

FINDING THE LOST. 223

Luke 15: 6; 19: 10.

Some years ago in a country place in New England where blueberries grew thickly in the mountains, a party of people went out to pick them, and somehow a little girl wandered away and was lost. From Thursday to Saturday no trace of her could be found. Men traversed the woods with torches, shouts went up in the hope that she would hear them. The whole community was aroused in alarm. At last, when hope was giving way to despair, the glad tidings was heard, Found, found, found! The poor little girl was almost dead with cold, hunger, exposure and fright, but kind hands lifted and bore her to her home, and placed her in her mother's arms. There was joy in that village over the lost that was again restored to safety and love and shelter. So, when a soul that has wandered, is brought back to the comfort of the Heavenly Father's arms there is ejoicing not only on earth but in heaven.

A SUGGESTION.

Would it not be a good idea to fit up a room in every church where the chronic kicker could exercise and work off his surplus strenuousness?

From the Ram's Horn, Chicago, Ill. Copyrighted.

UNUSUAL.

HEAD AND NECK.

The vexed question of conjugal obedience was settled by Spurgeon in a characteristic way. In an address at the marriage of the daughter of a friend he spoke thus to the bride about her future lord: "Let him be the head, and do you be the neck, and turn him which way you please."

SUPPRESSED.

In the early days of Mr. Beecher's career, when wit was unknown in the pulpit, some of the deacons of his church asked him if he didn't think such frequent outbursts of humor were calculated to diminish his usefulness. He listened patiently, and when they finished he said: "Brethren, if you only know how many funny things I keep in, you wouldn't complain about the few I let out."—Ladies' Home Journal.

CAIN'S WIFE.

When Rev. John McNeill was holding revival services at Cardiff, a young man, one night, thinking to perplex the preacher, sent up a note to the platform with the request that the following question might be publicly answered:

"Dear Mr. McNeill, if you are seeking to help enlighten young men, kindly tell me who was Cain's wife?"

Mr. McNeill read the note and then, amid breathless silence, he said:

"I love young men—enquirers for truth, especially—and should like to give this young man a word of advice. It is this: Don't lose your soul's salvation looking after other people's wives."

OPEN HOUSE.

A Japanese Christian on going away from home to his work in the morning, leaves his door unfastened, and puts upon it a notice that "the Christian good book" is lying on the table, and any one is welcome to go in and read it.

WANTED TO MAKE SURE.

A little boy who had been blowing bubbles all the morning, tiring of play, and suddenly growing serious, said, "Read me that story about heaven; it ith so gloriouth."

"I will," said the mother, "but first tell me, did you take the soap out of the water?"

"Oh, yeth; I'm pretty sure I did."

The mother read the description of the beautiful city, the streets of gold, the gates of pearl. He listened with delight; but when she came to the words, "No one can enter there who loveth or maketh a lie," bounding up, he said:

"I gueth I'll go and thee about that thoap!"—Northwestern Monthly.

A STORY FOR PAPA.

There is a moral in this little story of child life.

"Mamma," asked little 3-year-old Freddie, "are we going to heaven some day?"

"Yes, dear, I hope so," was the reply.

"I wish papa could go, too," continued the little fellow.

"Well, and don't you think he will?" asked his mother.

"Oh, no," replied Freddie, "he could not leave his business."

NOTHING.

An old Scotch farmer, being elected a member of the school board, visited the school and tested the intelligence of the class by his questions. The first inquiry was:

"Noo, boys, con ony o' you tell me what naething is?"

After a moment's silence a small boy in a back seat arose and replied:

"It's what an auld farmer gie's ye for haudin' his horse."—Selected.

A STREET ACQUAINTANCE.

Written for the Ram's Horn by Albert D. Watson.

I met the devil in the street
With shoes upon his cloven feet.
I knew him not. Quoth he: "Hast heard
The news afloat? The latest word?
Indeed? No? Then I will tell thee all."
And straightway, from a tongue of gall,
Such innuendo, hint and sneer
Poured into my unwilling ear.
In polished phrase and damning clause, I
marveled who this devil was.
"Excuse me, sir, if words can tell, I've met a
denizen of hell."
Retorted he with face aglow:
"A stranger, thou; else would'st thou know I
am Sir Gossip of renown,
Highly respected in this town."
"Jest as I thought," said I, "and now, good
morrow; Prince of Devils, thou."

JONAH AND THE WHALE.

A Salvation Army lassie went into a Superior street saloon Wednesday to sell the War Cry. A man asked her if she believed the bible.

"Certainly I do," said she.

"You don't believe the whale swallowed Jonah, do you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I don't."

"When I get to heaven I'll ask him," said the lassie.

"You won't find Jonah in heaven. He's in the other place."

"Well, then, you ask him."

THE MINISTER'S DOG.

A minister was one day walking along a road, and to his astonishment he saw a crowd of boys sitting in front of a ring with a small dog in the center. When he came up to them he put the following question:

"What are you doing to the dog?"

One little boy said: "Whoever tells the biggest lie wins it."

"Oh," said the minister, "I am surprised at you little boys, for when I was like you I never told a lie."

There was silence for a while, until one of the boys shouted: "Hand him up the dog!"

HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT.

Conducted by REV. JAMES M. GRAY, D. D.
Author of "Synthetic Bible Studies."

I.

THE MAKE-UP OF A SERMON.

Professor Phelps' definition of a sermon is "an oral address, to the popular mind, upon religious truth, as contained in the Sacred Scripture, *and elaborately treated.*" He emphasizes the last phrase to direct attention to the fact that a sermon is not an exhortation, or a "talk," or "informal remarks," but a structure, as he terms it. It is a building consisting of several distinct parts, e. g.:

1. The Text,
2. The Proposition,
3. The Explanation.
4. The Divisions,
5. The Development,
6. The Conclusion.

While, of course, there may be a sermon without a text, yet the latter is usually its fountain-head, introducing its subject easily and contributing to the important feature of variety. It should, as a rule, be comprehensive enough to include the subject about to be treated, and yet concise enough to include no more than the subject. A violation of the first-named canon suggests a man's hat perched on the top of his head, and the second, where it comes down over his ears.

The proposition defines the subject of the text, and may consist indeed, of only a single sentence. Its value is seen, as our author says, in the way in which a lawyer states his case to the jury, or a legislator speaks to a motion. "It furnishes a target for the speaker to strike and the hearer to watch." In an expository discourse the proposition may consist of the simple statement that you are about to explain or expound the text.

The explanation connects the text with the use to be made of it, and may consist in the analysis of the text itself, its relation to the context, the definition of certain of its words, and its comparison with parallel passages, in addition to the literature of the subject.

The divisions are, of course, that part of a sermon by which the leading thoughts of the text are analyzed and defined, assisting the preacher to think more orderly and the hearer to understand and remember more easily. They are the pegs to hang the thoughts on. There are certain principles to govern them, e. g.—they should be comprised within the proposition; they should be founded on real distinctions, i. e., each division should, in its subject-matter, be distinct from every other division; they should be properly classified; they should not anticipate or repeat one another; they should, if possible, indicate progress of thought, the strongest being kept to the last.

The development is the hardest part of the sermon since it is there the principle of composition is brought into exercise. Its prerequisites were referred to briefly in the earlier treatment of "the art of preaching," but some of them may be spoken of again. For example, after you have gotten your text, proposition, and divisions clearly in mind, how shall you begin the work of development? Try the plan of asking yourself these questions: What does the thought of this division require? Does it require explanation, illustration, proof, or application? If it requires all of these, in what proportion does it require them, and in what order should they come? This very simple exercise, recommended by Professor Phelps to his Andover students years ago, has been found very helpful in cultivating concentration of thought, and this, of all things, is what the young beginner requires.

But you reply, What if he has no thought, how shall he obtain it? In vain shall we seek to concentrate what is not possessed even in diffusion! This is indeed a sad case, but here comes in the meaning of the word "study." Reading makes the full man, full to bursting, where his mind must find vent. It is a comparatively easy matter for any man with a fair command of his mother tongue, to express himself upon a subject which he understands, and in which, for that reason, he is interested. Do you understand the Bible? Are you in the constant practice of reading it? If not, what right have you to call yourself a minister of the gospel? A later opportunity will be improved to speak of what the writer considers the best method for beginners in the reading of the Bible, but the man who has any appreciation of what the Bible is, and what it means to him in his ministry, will read it without waiting for anybody's method.

It is generally felt that for the practical development of a sermon, one needs to have a knowledge of human nature as well as a knowledge of the Bible. This is true, but where shall he obtain a better knowledge of human nature than in the Bible, especially the Old Testament? Shakespeare is admitted to be the greatest master in the delineation of human character known to the whole world, but a careful computation has shown that Shakespeare quotes the Bible 551 times. All his plays contain these quotations, which cover 57 out of the 66 books of the Sacred Scriptures.

Of course, besides a knowledge of men, one requires a knowledge of events. How has God been dealing with men, and how have the latter been dealing with one another outside of the sacred record? History, to be really interesting and helpful, needs to be read in outline first, and in detail afterwards. Let any young man, no matter how meagre an intellectual preparation he may have had, begin by reading such a limited work as Myer's "Outline History of the World," and it will furnish both a strong stimulus and wise direction for the reading of larger works covering particular periods and nations. Of course, the more he reads the more illustrative and corroborative material he will be gathering for the development of his sermons.

The same may be said about the natural

sciences. Very little is taught about them in the customary college course leading up to the degree of A. B. or A. M., but I have known some young men who have received much help in that line from the perusal of the Appleton "Science Primers." These are small and inexpensive books, not as yet out of print, which afford an introduction to geology, astronomy and related topics, and which, if nothing more, put one in a position to be intelligently interested in, and wisely use in sermonizing, the wonderful discoveries of the present time in the domain of material forces, with which current literature teems.

And now just a word about current literature. This is the age of newspaper reading and the making of many books, and while I would not encourage the use of newspapers and works of fiction as a source for texts and themes of sermons, yet one needs to keep abreast of what they contain and say, in order, without mentioning them perhaps, to counteract the virus of their religious and ethical instruction. All this furnishes material and suggestion for the development of sermons.

It also leads me to speak of the value of beginning a scrap-book or common-place book early in one's ministry, for the collecting and indexing of fugitive material gathered in this way as well as in the reading of the Bible itself. Nor should I omit to add the importance of keeping one's eyes and ears open for such illustrations and lessons as may come to him by the way. Henry Ward Beecher's illustrations, and those of F. B. Meyer are largely drawn from homely everyday happenings that to many people would pass by unnoticed. I need not mention, of course, the use of commentaries, encyclopedias, and Bible dictionaries where one has access to them, but I do wish to record my estimate of the worth of an English lexicon for the purpose of sermon-making. We think that if we possessed a Hebrew-English or Greek-English lexicon great results might come from them, and they do, where they are used intelligently; but let us not despise the homiletic value of a Webster or a Worcester. The antonyms and synonyms of some of the commonest words we use, to say nothing of their various definitions, will often start the mind in a train of thought eventuating in a sermon of unusual interest and power.

But let us "quench not the Spirit." When the writer was just beginning his ministry, he read this sentence in some work on Homiletics by one who was evidently a man of God: "Punctuate every paragraph of your sermon with prayer to the Holy Ghost." He has not forgotten the advice, and he believes if the young minister will act upon it, asking the Holy Ghost to select his text and theme, explain its truth, indicate its treatment, and fill his mind with the thoughts to amplify it, he will not be disappointed of an answer, and will have become possessed of the deepest and richest secret for the "make-up" of a sermon.

II.

SERMONIC HINTS FOR TRINITY SUNDAY.

In the Ecclesiastical Calendar Trinity Sunday follows next after Whitsunday. We append herewith as suggestive material for Bible-readings or sermons on the fundamental doctrine for which that Sunday stands, what are described as four lessons on the subject, from the "Editor's Bible Class" of *The Word-Bearer*, edited by Rev. H. S. Miller, M. A., Wilkesbarre, Pa.:

Lessons 38-39.

THE TRINITY.

"By the Trinity is meant the union of three distinct persons in one, so that all three are one as to substance, and three as to individuality. The *three* distinct persons are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The *one* is called the Godhead. The word "Trinity" (Latin "*trini*," three each, threefold) is a theological term, not found in the Bible, but very expressive.

The doctrine of the Trinity, like many other Bible doctrines, as well as many common things in nature, is not explained. God does not undertake to do it. We believe it because He says so. Those who will not believe anything that they cannot understand will make very poor Christians. They cannot understand how the eternal God became a babe, or why one of their fingers was made longer than the others.

The Trinity is spoken of in 1 John 5: 7. (This verse is not in the R. V. nor the best Greek Mss. It probably crept in from the Vulgate. There seems to be no good authority for it.)

In the baptismal form, Matt. 28: 19.

In the benediction, 2. Cor. 13: 14.

In the baptism of Jesus, Matt. 3: 16, 17.

In Jesus' last discourse, Jno. 14: 16, 17, 26; 15: 26.

In many other places, Rom. 8: 8, 9. 1 Cor. 12: 3-6. Eph. 2: 18; 4: 4-6. Heb. 9: 14. 1 Pet. 1: 2. Jude 20, 21. Rev. 1: 4, 5.

While the doctrine of the Trinity is not fully developed in the O. T., it is frequently alluded to and thus the way is prepared for the clear teaching in the N. T. In Gen. 1: 1 a plural noun (Gods) is joined to a singular verb, even at the risk of teaching the plurality of gods and sending the people into Polytheism. The Hebrew language has plenty of singular nouns for "God," without using a plural, especially since the Bible was to teach Monotheism. There must have been a truth at stake which demanded the risk. See also Gen 1: 26; 3: 22; 11: 7 and others.

The distinct number three is shown in the Priestly Blessing (Num. 6: 24-26), where the priest pronounced the Jehovah's name three times. See Ps. 29: 4, 5 and 7, 8; 96: 1, 2 and 7, 8; 115: 9, 10, 11; 118: 2-4, and 10-12, and 15-16. The poetical parallel is often sacrificed to the theological teaching. See also Isa. 6: 2-8."

Lessons 40-41.

THE TRINITY.

"The Trinity may be shown in other simple ways.

1. (1) The Father is God, Eph. 1: 2. 1 Pet. 1: 2. (2) The Son is God, Jno. 1: 1. 1 Tim. 3: 16. Heb. 1: 8. (3) The Holy Ghost is God, Acts 5: 3, 4. (4) God is unity. Ex. 20: 1, 2. Ps. 86: 10. Isa. 45: 5, 6, 21, 22. (5) Hence the Trinity.

2. The three persons have the same attributes ascribed to them. (1) Eternity, Ps. 90: 2. Coll. 1: 17. Heb. 9: 14. (2) Omnipresence, Jer. 23: 24. Eph. 1: 23. Ps. 139: 7-10. (3) Omnipotence, Jer. 32: 17, 27. Matt. 28: 18. Rom. 15: 19. (4) Omniscience, Acts 15: 18. Jno. 2: 24, 25; 16: 30. I Cor. 2: 10, 11. (5) Wisdom, Rom. 11: 33. Col. 2: 3. Isa. 11: 2. (6) Holiness, Lev. 11: 44. Acts 3: 14. Rom. 1: 4. (7) Truth, Psa. 117: 2. Jno. 14: 6. 1 Jno. 5: 6. (8) The work of creation, Gen. 1: 1. Col. 1: 16. Job. 26: 13; 33: 4.

3. Each has a distinct personality and a distinct work, e. g. the Father begets, the Son redeems, the Spirit sanctifies, and children are born to the Father through the redeeming work of the Son and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." Rev. 5: 9. Titus 3: 5. We pray in the Spirit, in the name of the Son, to the Father. Jno. 16: 23. Eph. 6: 18.

4. Mr. Binney (Theological Compend. p. 88) gives illustrations of the Trinity as follows: (1) The Sun is composed of the round orb, the light and the heat, each of which is called the sun. When we say that the sun is nearly 900,000 miles in diameter, we mean the orb; when we say that the sun is bright, we mean the light; when we say that the sun is warm, we mean the heat. The orb is the sun, the light is the sun, and the heat is the sun, and each means a different thing, and yet there is but one sun. (2) When we say that man is immortal, we mean his soul; when we say that he is learned, we mean his mind; when we say that he is sick or dead, we mean his body. Each of these we call man. Each is different from the others, and yet there are not three men but one man. (3) Likewise we have judgment, memory, and imagination, each of which is called mind."

* * * *

The Inferential Evidence of the Trinity:—The thought suggested in the last paragraph of the preceding Bible-reading from Binney's Theological Compend might be carried much further of course, and prove very interesting and instructive. For example, space is divided into length, breadth and height; time into past, present and future; material bodies into solid, liquid and gaseous; lights into the fundamental colors, red, yellow and blue. As Wordsworth sings:

"Life is one doxology
To the blessed Trinity."

Moreover, travellers and historians, as well as psychologists and naturalists, call attention to the same truth as found in the history of other religions than our own. The Emperor of China offers every year a sacrifice to the spirit of trinity in unity. India has a trinity, and so also the Egyptians, Babylonians, Grecians, and even our own American Indians, who worshipped the sun under three images called, father, son and brother sun. Schiller, the German theologian, says: "This Trinitarian idea does not exist because there is such a thing as Christianity, but, on the contrary, Christianity exists because this idea is the most original of all." Almost every good work on Theology furnishes examples and illustrations of this kind, some of the above are taken from Christlieb's *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief.*

III.
HOMILETIC SUGGESTIONS IN EXODUS.

1. *An Object Lesson in Human History.*—"The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew." i, 12. Two thoughts suggest themselves, (1), the futility of human opposition to the divine purpose, and (2), the bright side of human suffering. The following extract from an unknown author applies to the last named:

"The very things we should shield ourselves from had we power, and that we shrink from because they seem most undesirable, are the very things in which God makes Himself better known to us. So to miss them would mean to miss new views of God and manifestations of His power. How our hearts praise Him for the strong love that can endure to see us suffer in the discipline, because He looks forward to the "eternal weight of glory" which is the "afterward" of the "light affliction" He permits for a "moment."

2. *The Proximity of the Simple and the Sublime.*—"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, * * * And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush." iii, 1, 2. The Lord is not far from any one of us. The humblest are honored with the profoundest revelations of heaven, think of Hannah, Gideon and Mary, the Mother of our Lord. In fidelity to a lowly calling comes the call to a high one. Earthly obscurity does not enshroud one from the observation of God. The lives of Abraham Lincoln and D. L. Moody illustrate this truth.

3. *Increase of Light in Following the Light.*—"And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush." iii, 4. There are three steps here in God's revelation of Himself to Moses. God takes the initiative in the phenomenon of the burning bush. Moses responds to it by considering the sight and turning aside to look at it. God then meets his advance by calling to him out of the midst of the bush. It is a parable re-enacted in the history of every saved sinner, and many times re-enacted in the growth and development of every true saint. God gives as we take.

4. *Assurance the Consequent Rather than the Forerunner of Faith.*—"And He said, Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee; when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." iii, 12. Moses was not to receive the token for some time after he had fulfilled the condition. Apply it to the sinner who thinks he can not be saved till he experiences feeling, and the saint who hesitates to believe that he has received the gift of the Holy Ghost, for example, till the proof is seen in some unusual circumstance of his life. Note, however, that Moses was not left without any evidences of tokens of the divine favor until he reached Sinai; nor are we destitute of such evidences though the supreme token is withheld until an increasing faith compels it.

5. *A Prepared People for a Prepared Preacher.*—"They shall hearken to thy voice." iii, 18. The secret of gathering, holding, and

influencing a congregation for God lies in being sent of God for such a purpose. Such a preacher is not obliged to resort to claptrap for an audience, nor to wear himself out in vain efforts to bring men under conviction to the truth. God has a place for every man to occupy whom he calls into His service. He has the fruit for every such husbandman to gather. His call is the essential thing. Have we received it?

6. *The Worldling's Challenge.*—"Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" Exodus v, 2. Note the marginal references. In outlining the sermon we might proceed to show:

1. Who the Lord is.
2. How His voice may be known.
3. The obligation resting on us to obey it.
4. The peril of disregarding it.

An Old Preacher on Preaching.*

BY REV. ALEX. MACLAREN, D. D.,
President of the Baptist Union, 1901.

Fact and logic are both outraged by the names of the two Unions which join in this assembly. The division into Congregationalists and Baptists is faulty as if one said, Englishmen and Londoners, for all Baptists are Congregationalists. We are closest of kin among the Free Churches, and perhaps, therefore, have sometimes been furthest apart, for cordiality often increases as the square of the distance. But we all feel the influence of the uniting tendency which is so marked a feature of the present time, and of which we are happy in seeing with us today a distinguished representative in the person of my old school fellow and present friend, the first Moderator of the United Free Church of Scotland. Our joint meetings do but demonstrate, on a somewhat larger scale, our relations in most cases all through the country. They are the natural expression of a real and felt unity, not a hollow show of an unreal. I sometimes venture to think that the ministers of the two churches are in more cordial and closer relations than their flocks are. But be that as it may, we all meet today as brethren with hearty good will and mutual sympathy, and I esteem it a signal honor to occupy the place which I do on so happy an occasion.

In casting about for a topic for this address I have thought of many burning questions which it would be timely to discuss, but I feel it wisest to keep to my own metier. I am a preacher, and have been for more than half a century, I speak here mainly to preachers, and I venture to offer some considerations as to the preacher's office, its themes, its demands, its possibilities. No one will deny that the question of whether our preaching is as efficacious as it might be is a burning question, too. Widespread searchings of heart are at work among the Free Churches on that matter. And they have only too good ground in the contrast which would strike us as alarming if we were not so accustomed to it, between the immense amount of effort and the small results apparent. I suppose there are some 6,000 or 8,000 sermons delivered every Sunday by the ministers of our two denominations—and what comes of them all? We have covered the land with chapels, and yet do we even keep up with the growth of population? "Ye have sowed much, and brought home little;" and if so much seed yields so scanty a harvest the sower may well ask himself why? No doubt there are trends of thought and habits of life today which make the preacher's task eminently hard, but we have no such difficulties to face as the first messengers of the Cross had to encounter and overcome. Are the philosophical or scientific tendencies of today worse than the front which wisdom-seeking Greece presented to them? Are the habits of today more antagonistic to the Gospel than was the corruption that honeycombed the luxurious sensualism of Asia? Is the secularizing influence of trade and imperialism more hostile than was the self-centered pride of Rome, with its cult of the Emperor? Is the ignorance of our slums more dense than the darkness that wrapped "the regions beyond"? And yet the Message conquered. Why not now? The Message is the same; the Divine power that clothed the messengers is the same. "O, thou that art named the house of Israel is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? Are these His doings? Surely there can be but one answer to the twofold question—an answer which throws us back on ourselves, and bids us look to ourselves as the causes of the loss of power. The last character in which I should desire to stand before brethren whom I honor so highly and love so much, is that of an accuser. But I have nearly finished my work, and I would fain use the opportunity given me today, to leave some words which my younger brethren, whose task promises to be still more difficult than that of us older men, may perhaps feel to derive some additional weight, because they may be the last which the speaker will address to such an assembly. If I venture to speak of the preacher and his work I must lay bare my own ideals, and to do that is to lay bare my own shortcomings for our ideals are the sternest critics of our accomplishings.

It may be freely admitted that the preacher, as the Free Churches know him, is the result of a process of evolution starting with the simple New Testament arrangements. Whether the process has been legitimate, and the product satisfactory, or whether there are further developments to be expected and desired, need not concern us now. The point which I seek to make is that, whilst great authorities have told us that differentiation of functions is the mark of progressive evolution, we have in the preacher of today an apparent coalescence of three offices which are separate in the early church—those of evangelist, teacher and prophet. I purpose to deal with my subject under these three points of view.

THE PREACHER AS EVANGELIST.

The preacher is, first and foremost, an Evangelist—a bearer of good news. The very name contains a designation of the preacher's theme, for it, at least, makes this clear that he has to tell a fact, which is freighted with

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gladness for a sad world. Whatever more the Gospel is, it is primarily the history of something that did occur. The far-reaching presuppositions and implications of the fact, its force as the spring of transformed humanity, of individual and social progress, open out into a wide room where all speculative and practical intellects may expatiate, but the beginning of all these is a person, and the fact of His life and death. The grain of mustard seed grows into the great tree in whose branches all the birds can nest and sing, beneath whose shadow all the peoples can house. "We preach Christ crucified." It is one thing to preach salvation by Christ; it is another to preach Christ as the Saviour. The more we can free ourselves from the abstract and technical theology of the schools, and can make our words throb with the miracle of that loving, human heart, and with the pathos and power of that death for a world's sins, the more shall we deserve the name of evangelists. Hearts are more surely to be won by showing them Jesus crucified than by our comments on the sight. A Christ without a cross is a king without a throne. If our ministry is to have power, it must all center in the Death for the world's sins. Otherwise it will be like a lighthouse without a lamp. It will have no grip, no impulse, no regenerating power. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men." There are preachers who demagnetize the Gospel, because they falter in the proclamation of that "lifting up" which, because it is the secret of Christ's power to heal the fiery serpent's poisoned sting is the secret of His power to draw, first, the languid looks of the victims, and then their whole nature, yielded to Him in love and loyalty. The experience of the recent Free Church missions taught us all that, when we really "meant business" and were seeking for what would touch hearts, we instinctively went back to the simple elementary truths which some of us had been tempted to think too simple and elementary for our intelligent audiences, or too threadbare to be listened to with interest. When preachers really and intensely desire to "save souls"—and have found that that old-fashioned phrase has a meaning today—they will instinctively grasp the only instrument that can effect the purpose, and will find themselves saying: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners"—and they will be wise if they add with Paul, "of whom I am chief," for the sense of personal need is an indispensable element in the evangelist's work.

Our message implies that sin is a universal reality, from which there is no deliverance but through Jesus. Has the fact of sin, its reality and its consequences, its due place in modern preaching? I for one very much doubt it. Modern theories of heredity and environment, modern laxity of moral fibre, have taken many shades of blackness out of the black thing. Men think less gravely of sin, and so they superficially diagnose the world's disease and therefore they superficially prescribe the remedy. An inadequate conception of sin lies at the root of most theological heresies and Utopian schemes of reformation of society. It is fatal to the earnestness, the pathos and the power of the preacher's work. Unless we have our hearts and minds laden with the burden of men's sins our voices will not ring out the vibrating notes of the good news of One who saves His people from their sins, because "Himself bare our sins in His own body." We must all confess that, yielding to the "Zeitgeist," the trend of opinion and feeling prevalent around us, and as children of the age, we have been tempted to think less severely, less pityingly of sin, and less solemnly of its certain result, death, than either our Master or His apostles did. We have too much shrunk from plain speech on the guilt and the danger of sinners. And, just in exact proportion to our failure in these respects has necessarily followed our failure in ringing out the good news of the Christ, the propitiation for our sins and for the whole world.

The preacher is further spoken of in the New Testament as a herald, and that title implies that his proclamation be plain, clear, assured. He is not to speak timidly, as if diverse winds of doctrine had blown back his voice into his trumpet. He is not to bring an ambiguous message in cloudy words. "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid." The Evangelist needs to deliver his good news with urgency, as if it was of some moment that people should know and accept it. Is that note of urgency audible, as it should be, in our preaching? The Evangelist has need of tenderness. "We entreat as though God did beseech by us." What outgush of sympathetic yearning can be too great fitly to bear on its current the message of a love which died to save? Are we not too little accustomed to preach with our hearts? Should we not be foolishly ashamed to say, "I now tell you even weeping?" The Evangelist has need of the personal element in his message. It has to be rigidly subordinated, else he is in danger of preaching himself, not Jesus. He has not to obtrude his own personality, but he has to speak as one who has felt the rapture of the joyful news which he proclaims. "We have found the Messiah," was the first Christian sermon ever preached, and it was so efficacious that it converted the whole congregation, for it brought Peter to Jesus. "That which we have seen and handled, that proclaim we unto you" is the mold into which the most effectual evangelizing work has ever run. The evangelist has need of elasticity in his methods, while he preserves uniformity in his theme. Our recent mission has taught us that, if we are to get at the outlying masses, whom the church of today, thank God! is awakening to long to reach, we must not be afraid of flinging away some of our old appliances, and shaping new ways of getting at the dense crowds of English heathens. Our stereotyped services do not attract them, and never will. Personally I do not believe that "the masses" will ever be reached, until Christian men and women, in far larger numbers and with far more system than hitherto, go among them, and by individual effort cast

silken chains of sympathy and brotherliness round them which may draw them out of the depths. But we must also have changes in methods, and the abandonment of a stiff conservatism which would fossilize our churches. I am not pleading for anything sensational, still less for importing entertainments either for eye or ear into our evangelistic work. All I wish to emphasize is that we must vary our methods, and take care that the eternal freshness of the ever young Good News is not hidden under the mustiness of ancient modes of action, which have proved to be ineffectual to reach the multitudes of "them that are without."

THE PREACHER AS TEACHER.

But the preacher has to be a teacher as well as an evangelist. Whether it is a development in accordance with the principles of the New Testament church that all public, oral teaching should be in his hands is a question that does not concern us here. We may freely allow that a higher ideal would be: "When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation," and yet see that the present order of things is best for the present spiritual state of the church, and be sure that as soon as that changes for the better the old order will change with it. When the temperature rises, there will be an outburst of spring flowers.

But the teaching office of the preacher is depreciated, not only in the name of an appeal to the primitive condition of the church, but from the extreme other side of the most modern outlook on things, as being superseded by the hundred-voiced press. The men and women of this generation, we are told, form their opinions from books, not from sermons. I should demur to the word "form," as expressing the process by which a large proportion of them arrive at what they call their opinions; I should consent to say "get their opinions," for it is not a process of reasoned formation, but of more or less accidental and unreasoned acquisition. The opinions do not grow, are not shaped by patient labor, but are imported into the new owner's mind ready made, "in Germany," or elsewhere, but certainly not in his own workshop. But granting the influence of the press, if it supersedes the pulpit, it is the fault of the occupant thereof. A certain minister once told a shrewd old Scottish lady that he was engaged to deliver an address on the power of the pulpit, and asked what her views on the subject were. She answered: "The power o' the pulpit! That depends on wha's in it." Which is a truth to be laid to heart by all preachers. No man is superseded but through his own deficiencies. There must be weakness in the wall which the storm blows down. The living voice has all its old power today, when it is a voice, and not an echo, or a mumble. If a man has anything to say and will say it with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, he will not lack auditors. Books have their province and preachers have theirs and neither can efface the other or supply the place of the other. The cry that the pulpit is effete comes mostly from quarters who do not despise the pulpit so much as dislike the truths which it teaches only too powerfully for their liking.

We may, then, turn to consider that aspect of the preacher's work undisturbed. And the first thing that I desire to lay stress on is, that the educational is never to be separated from the evangelistic office. True, "there are diversities of operations;" and idiosyncracies and spiritual gifts, which for the most part follow in their line, may mark out one man more especially for the one kind of work, and another for the other. We must all rejoice that there are brethren among us who are endowed with remarkable gifts of presenting the Good News, which clearly disclose Christ's purpose for them. Still, it remains true and important to keep in view, that the truest teaching must be evangelistic, and the truest evangelizing must be educational. The web is made up of warp and woof. The evangelism which appeals to emotion only is false to the Gospel; for God's way of moving men is to bring truth to their understandings, which shall then set their emotions at work, and so pass on to move the will, the directness of the man, and thus at last affect the actions. As Whichcote says, "Religion begins with knowledge; it proceeds to temper, and ends in practice." The evangelist who is not a teacher will build nothing that will last. And not less one-sided, and therefore transient, will be the work of the teacher who is not an evangelist. He will give husks instead of the bread of life, notions that may rattle in skulls like seeds in dried poppyheads, but not convictions which burn all the more because they are light as well as heat.

The true theologian ever brings his doctrines to bear on the emotions, and then on the will, and tnen on practice. That "theology" suffers under the imputation of being abstract, dry, remote from life is the fault of the teacher, not of the subject. The preacher is not to duplicate his part, like an actor who sustains two characters in a play, and to come on the stage at one scene as evangelist, and in another as teacher. He is to be both at once and to be both always.

For the most advanced instruction that can be given or received does not leave the most initial truths behind. It only unfolds them. The teacher's subject matter is the same as the evangelist's. The difference lies in the mode of viewing it, and the purpose for which it is considered. The last book of Euclid rests on the axioms and postulates that precede the first. No Christian thought can ever travel beyond the Incarnation, Sacrifice and Ascension of Jesus Christ, the Indwelling Spirit, "the forgiveness of sins and the life everlasting." To leave these behind is not progress but decadence. Not to get past, but to get more deeply into, these truths is the growth of the Christian life. Bees press themselves down into the flowers from which they would draw the honey, "and murmur by the hour" in their bells. Wasps and other vagrant things flit past them and get none. "Whoever goeth onward"—as John says, with a flash of irony as he quotes the advanced thinker's watchword —"and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God." The reminder would benefit some modern successors of these proud, old

incipient Gnostics. To lead minds to see the profound and far-reaching truths that underlie the Gospel, what its facts pre-suppose of God and Man, of the Father and the Eternal Word, what they reveal of the heart of things, and of the Heart at the heart of them; to lead to the recognition, and still more to the application to individual and social and national life, of the principles that flow from the facts, to disclose to the minds and to lay on the hearts of men the Incarnation and Sacrifice and Reign of Jesus as the world-redeeming power, as the revelation of the perfect life for men and nations, to find and exhibit in Jesus, the answer to all the questions of the intellect, the satisfaction of all the needs of the heart, the source and standard of ethics, the fountain of all wisdom, the renovator of humanity, the purifier of society, the King of Men—and to keep fast by the Cross and Passion of that Lord, while he is following out the issues of His work to their remotest consequences—these are the tasks of the Christian preacher in his capacity of teacher. All knowledge may come into his sphere. There is room for the widest culture. The teacher may elaborate his theme with the closest thought, or may adorn it with poetry and imagination. There is room for all gifts in the building of the great temple. Bezaleel was taught by the Spirit of God to execute his works of artistic beauty, and Hiram's workmen had to hew logs in Lebanon. But the wider the teacher sweeps his circle, the stronger must be its center. The more he lengthens his cords, the more must he strengthen his stakes—and the middle prop that holds up the tent is the Cross with Christ upon it. "Him first, Him last, Him midst and without end." All that the teacher has to teach is summed up in one word—Christ. His whole theme is "the truth as it is in Jesus."

As the theme is Christ, so the text-book is the Bible. Whatever the Higher Criticism has done, it has not touched the main substance of the Gospel which we have to preach, nor do even its most advanced positions seem to me seriously to affect the homiletic worth of Scripture. The truths of the Bible remain, even if extreme theories as to date and manner of origination of its several parts were much more undeniably proven than they are. I venture to use the privilege of age and appeal very earnestly to my younger brethren especially, beseeching them not to be tempted by either the mistaken notion of increasing the attractiveness of their preaching or by the natural wish of youth to do something original and break away from conventions. Conventional usages were instinct with life and meaning when they were new, and it is best to try whether their original significance is worth saving, before we resolve to shake them off. The habit of prefacing a sermon with a text is, no doubt, a survival, and it is sometimes unmeaning enough, but it is a witness that the sermon's true purpose is to explain, confirm and enforce Scripture. Once the text was followed by a sermon dealing with it. Would that it were always so now! Better to put new life into the old form by making a text really what it is meant to be than to break through it in a flight after something "fresh and unconventional."

It does not follow from the Bible's being the text-book that preaching is to be expository in the technical sense of that word, though I confess to a belief that if we had more of that, we should have a robuster type of Christian, with a firmer grip of his professed creed, than is common today. The days of protracted exposition are, for good or evil, over. There will be no more courses of sermons like those which the painful and reverend Mr. Caryll perpetrated on Job, and published in three thick folios—double-columned, if my memory is correct.

The widest scope is to be given to varieties of mind and ways of assimilating Scripture, but that ministry only is true to its duties, and up to the height of its large possibilities, which makes its main purpose the drawing out into clear statement, and the supporting by forceful argument, and the impressing by emotional pleadings, what it has pleased God to say to men. If it was worth His while to give us the Book, it is worth our while to toil to fathom its depth, to saturate our thinking and feeling with its truths, and it is our highest function and office to interpret them to our brethren. We shall "shine as lights in the world" if we "hold forth the Word of Life." There are nebulae, as well as brilliant stars, in the firmament of the Word. It is for the preacher to show men that the stars are suns and the nebulae galaxies of light. How unworthy it is for him to direct his telescope from the heaven of the Word to the low levels of current topics! I shall have to speak presently of the place which the latter must hold in the preacher's work, but they will hold their right place, only if he is true to his vocation as being first of all a minister of the Word of God.

More reasons than can be enumerated, much less here expanded, concur in enforcing this. In no other profession would the text-books be treated as the Bible sometimes is. There is no such discipline for the preacher as the careful, minute study of Scripture. Patient work with such unspiritual implements as lexicon and concordance yields rich fruits of spiritual discernment, gives such grasp of great principles as nothing else will give, opens out endless vistas into the deep things of God, as witness such books as the Bishop of Durham's priceless commentaries on John and Hebrews. A preacher who has steeped himself in the Bible will have a clearness of outlook which will illuminate many dark things, and a firmness of touch which will breed confidence in him among his hearers. He will have the secret of perpetual freshness, for he cannot exhaust the Bible. No pulpit teaching will last as long as that which is given honestly and persistently to the elucidation and enforcement of Biblical truth. As the Scotch psalm-book has it:

> "In old age, when others fade
> He fruit still forth shall bring."

We have to do the work of Christian teachers under remarkable conditions. On the one hand there is great ignorance of Scripture and

of systematized Christian truth among our congregations, and we are perpetually in danger of over-estimating the amount of knowledge on which we may reckon. Otherwise well-educated men and women have but the vaguest notions as to Scripture facts and the most confused apprehensions of Christian ideas. I for one believe that a considerable percentage in every congregation in the land is unaffected by our sermons because it does not understand what we are saying. We have to aim at simplicity, not to be afraid of being elementary, and to say as Paul said: "To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous and for you it is safe." On the other hand, we have to speak to people who have considerable education, and some who think they have more than they really have, who have been fed on a miscellaneous collection of scraps, *De omnibus rebus—et quibusdam aliis*, in magazines and handbooks, and it is hard to get an entrance for solid Christian truth into such minds. Short sermons, this Sunday's having no connection with last Sunday's, and based on snippets of Scripture, the meaning of which is of small consequence, correspond to the week's diet of desultory reading. And withal there is the heaving swell of intellectual unrest, which affects all our congregations. How are we to discharge our teaching work in the face of all this?

Mainly by the strong, sympathetic presentation of positive truth. Controversy is needful, but it is seldom efficacious. It convinces the already convinced. Better to abound in affirmations than in negations, though they will be branded as dogmatism. Speak the truth, as you know it and feel it, and let it work. There are two ways of getting rid of weeds—to grub them up, or to sow good seed, which will spring and clear the ground. And we must never forget that, what we have to teach is no philosophy for the few, no system of doctrine for trained understandings, but the Gospel for the world. When one of Luther's disciples once asked him for some guidance as to how he should preach before the Duke, the Doctor said, "All your sermons should be of the simplest. Do not regard the prince, but the simple, stupid, rude and unlearned people, who are cut out of the same cloth as the prince. If, in my sermon, I were to have Philip Melancthon and the other doctors in my eye, I should produce nothing good, but I preach the simplest way to the unlearned, and it suits everybody." Some of our hearers are educated and can follow our highest flights, but many of them cannot. But all have the one human heart, with its deepest needs identical in all. Sad souls are to be comforted, torpid ones to be stung or startled or wooed into sensitiveness and activity, eyes glued to earth to be drawn to look up, the inmost self which is ever in its depths lonely to be led to the Immortal Companion and lover of all souls, the consciousness of the bondage and burden of sin to be roused, and, when roused to be soothed—and the preacher is to do all this! Surely the vision of the needs of a gathered audience might strike the most eloquent dumb, and make the most confident timid. But "our sufficiency is of God," and God's sufficiency will be ours, in the measure in which we steadfastly follow out the purpose of making our preaching truly Biblical. If we draw from these deep fountains, we shall never return with our vessels empty.

THE PREACHER AS PROPHET.

The preacher's work has a third aspect. Besides being evangelistic and educational it is also ethical, and, in that aspect especially, may rightly be designated as Prophetic. Of course the form of "inspiration" belonging to the prophet in Israel is not claimed for the Christian prophet, but every true preacher should be able to say: Thus saith the Lord, and if we do not speak what we have heard in the ear in many a secret "hour of high communion with the living God" we had better be silent for evermore. It may be objected that the preacher has neither the inspiration nor the insight into the future which belonged to the prophet. But there are different forms of inspiration; and that which is secured by hours of communion, by earnest effort to stretch the narrow tablet of the mind so that it shall be capacious enough to hold the amplitude of God's message, by sedulous suppression of our own clamorous opinions and resolute turning a deaf ear to the world's noises, by docility and by prayer, is no less real than that which touched Isaiah's with a live coal. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Philip the evangelist's seven daughters, or the prophets in the Corinthian Church, had no inspiration which we have not. What does Paul direct as to the latter? "Let them speak by two or three, and let the others discern," a function which is very cheerfully and abundantly discharged among us. So the New Testament prophet's teaching had to submit to criticism. It had further to submit sometimes to being cut short; "If a revelation be made to another standing by, let the first keep silence." So a New Testament prophet could be tedious and had to learn to give way. There seems no reason to believe that the inspiration which endowed these prophets has ceased to be given to us. Much rather is it that the name has become disused, than that the persons who have a right to it have failed. Are there not Prophets among us today? Have there not always been Prophets in the Church?

Nor does the lack of the predictive insight damage the claim to the name. It is a common-place now that that element is not the sole, nor even the principal, one in the ideal of the prophet. If we rightly understand what he was to Israel, we shall rightly understand how he still survives, in modern garb indeed, but the same. For his chief function was to be an incarnation of the national conscience. It was his task to hold aloft the Divine Ideal for Israel, to bring life to the test of the Divine law, to stand before king and people undismayed, with his face as iron against their faces, to denounce national and individual transgression, to set the trumpet to his "mouth and declare to Israel its sin." He was necessarily a predicter, not only because God gave to some of the order a fore-knowledge of particular events, but also because God had graven deep in his mind the sure conviction that righteousness exalts a nation,

that all national or individual departure from God is bitter as well as evil. that sin is death, and good the sure result in the long run of goodness. The prophet supplied the force for the Law, the dynamic by which it got itself obeyed. As one of them says, his word was "as a hammer," to drive home and fasten in a sure place the nails of the Law.

And is not this the function of the Christian Church as a whole, and eminently of its preachers? What are we here for but to bring the principles of the Gospel to bear on all life? No doubt the courtiers of an Ahab or a Zedekiah said what they thought clever things about the fastidious prophetic conscience, just as we have heard would-be taunts which were really tributes and turned to a testimony, about "the Nonconformist conscience." It is the Christian conscience, and to be its voice is no small part of the preacher's duty. He has to direct the searchlight on individual sins, especially those prevalent in the class from whom his hearers are drawn. He has to apply the measure of the sanctuary to worldly maxims which his hearers take for axioms, and to practices which they think legitimate because they are popular. He has to witness against the cancerous vices which are eating out the life of the nation. He has to bring national acts to the standard of Christ's teaching, and to insist that politics is but Christian principles applied to national life. A church which has ceased to protest against the "world" suits the world's purpose exactly, and is really a bit of the world under another name. The true church must always be remonstrant, protestant, a standing rebuke to the world, till the world has accepted and applied the principles of the Gospel to personal and social life. And the preacher who does not give voice to the church's protest fails in one of his plainest and chiefest duties.

We need brave men in the pulpit, who shall speak with freedom what they believe they have learned from God, of the evils in the land. We need men who have heard Him saying to them, "Be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before them." We need for the prophet's office much secluded fellowship with God, who "wakens" His servants' "ear morning by morning," and gives them "the tongue of them that are taught." We need to keep clear of popular currents of thought and practice, suspecting always that truth does not dwell with majorities, and that what the multitude acclaim, God is likely to condemn. We have to be keenly sensitive to the drift of thought, else we shall not wisely make head against it, or know how to use or direct it. We have to remember that preaching may be as accurately adapted to the times, when it directly contradicts popular dicta, as when it falls in with them, and that the Greeks' demand for wisdom, and the Jews' for a sign, were met by being refused in appearance, even while granted in truth.

We have need to remember the woes pronounced on two classes of prophets, those who "stole the word every man from his neighbor," and those who "prophesied out of their own hearts, having seen nothing," and heard no voice from on high. So we have to be sure that we stand on our own feet, see with our own eyes, are not plagarists or copyists, nor borrow oil from our neighbors' vessels, but go to them that sell for ourselves. And on the other hand we have to see that the word, which is in that sense our own, is, in a deeper sense, not our own, but God's. We have to deal at first hand with Him, and to suppress self that He may speak. And no man will ever be the Lord's prophet, however eloquent or learned he may be, unless he knows what it is to sit silent before God, and in the silence to hear the still, small, most mighty voice that penetrates the soul, and to the hearing ear is sweet as harpers harping with their harps, and louder than the noice of many waters.

But this prophetic or ethical aspect of the preacher's work can never be rightly done, unless it is based upon the evangelistic and the educational.

We shall rejoice that the pulpit and the Church have recognized more clearly than before, the call to make their voice heard on Christ's side, in regard to drunkenness, gambling, impurity, and other national vices. But it will be no gain to the cause of Christian morality or of national righteousness, if the ethical side of religion is presented exclusively or disproportionately to the other two, which are its foundation. Let us have applied Christianity by all means—the more the better, but let us make sure first that there is the Christianity to apply. Let us preach Christ as the regenerator of society, but let us not omit to preach Him as the Saviour of the soul from sin. Let us begin where the Gospel begins, with "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"—and then let us draw forth from the depths of that great word all the teaching which it contains, and all the ethics for single souls, for society and for the world, which flow from it. It is Christ the Sacrifice and the Saviour who is Christ the wisdom of God, and the realized ideal of humanity, the embodiment of the perfect law for life, the perfect motive to fulfil it, and the perfect giver of the perfect power for obedience. It is Christ, the Sacrifice for men and the wisdom of God, who is the King of nations, from whom the peoples will learn righteousness, and following whom the tribes of the earth shall enter into the land of peace. We, the preachers of His all-transforming and all-vivifying name, have to preach Him in all the aspects of His mission, and to present these, so far as our imperfections will permit, in the order, proportion and harmony in which they are revealed to us. The threefold beam may be separated into its parts by a prism, but neither of these three is sunshine. The preacher has to try to re-combine them into the sweet, all-blessing white ray, which every eye feels to be light. We are preachers—that is to say, we are evangelists, teachers, prophets. Let us not limit ourselves to either function, but try always to blend the three in that one which should include them all.

Fathers and brethren, I am but too conscious of the imperfection of the conceptions

of our office, which I have ventured to lay before you. I am still more conscious of the imperfection of my presentation of these. I am most of all conscious of the imperfections of my attempts at realizing their ideal, in my day of service on which the evening shadows are falling. But, however condemnatory may be the light of an ideal of our office, the absence or dimness of that light is fatal. The more loftily we think of our work, the more lowly will be our estimate of ourselves, and the more earnest our efforts to reach up to the height of our possibilities, which are therefore our duties. The more we feel the burden of the Lord laid on us as evangelists, the more shall we have a passion for souls, which will fill our hearts with wistful tenderness, and soften our voices into prevalent entreaty. The more we rise to the requirements of our function as teachers, the more shall we labor to learn what we have to teach, and make all our culture however wide, all our acquirements however various, all our thinking however profound, subservient to the Master Truth, like mirrors set round a central light. And we shall feed the lambs as well as the sheep, the babes as well as the full grown men, seeking to achieve the simplicity in which full comprehension of deep truths is ever garbed, and so will speak with the authority of the Truth itself and not as the scribes. The more we are constrained by the word of the Lord given to us as His prophets, the more bold shall we be to weigh popular habits and customary sins in the balances of the sanctuary, and the more shall we sometimes be honored to help in stemming evil—but if not, we shall have delivered our souls, and "whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, they shall know that there hath been a prophet among them."

Some of us are almost passing from the stage, some of us are pressing on to it, eager, hopeful, perhaps thinking that we shall do much better than did the veterans, who now seem to "lag superfluous." The modes of thinking change as do the thinkers, the wonderful new lamps of one age become the dim twinkling candles of the next. Much in our conceptions of the Truth will not long outlive ourselves. That which can be shaken will be removed. Be it so; that which cannot be shaken will remain—and what cannot be shaken is the Gospel of the "Kingdom that cannot be moved," and its King, the same yesterday, today, and forever. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached."

BOOKS.

The Modern American Bible, the volumes of Matthew and Mark, having come from the press, is another valuable addition to the increase of interest in Bible reading. Money is mentioned in dollars and cents. If you read your Scripture lesson from it the audience will cock both ears, to be sure that they don't miss a word. Thomas Whittaker, New York. 50 cents a volume.

"The Story of My Life and Work," by Booker T. Washington, is a life-story that is stranger than fiction! It is a recital of the most thrilling experience, heroic struggle and remarkable achievement ever written. No tale or romance could be more fascinating. From the time the American people were charmed, thrilled and inspired by the marvelous rise of those two thoroughly representative types of American possibilities—Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas—they have witnessed no such display of courage, ambition and invincible determination struggling for the uplifting of humanity, as in the life of Booker T. Washington. But while the former gained their renown by advocating the destruction of an almost universally detested institution—Mr. Washington has practically dug his career out of the soil. J. L. Nichols & Co., Naperville, Ill. See advertisement on page 387.

In response to an inquiry concerning the reliability of the New York and London Electric Ass'n., Kansas City, Mo., who advertise Actina in our columns, we learn that Rev. J. M. Foster, Swatow, China, and Rev. S. D. Hague, Mattawa, Ont., were greatly benefitted. It is also highly commended by a number of business men. We have examined the device and find it as represented.

After his voluntary resignation from the Speakership of the House of Representatives, Hon. Thomas Brackett Reed began the preparation of a literary work, which is destined to add the laurels of literary achievement to those of the Legislative forum.

He has associated with him several men of high standing in literature, as well as in other fields of activity, and has issued through John D. Morris & Company of Philadelphia, his publishers, a library of "Modern Eloquence," which contains famous after-dinner speeches, classic and popular lectures, the best occasional addresses, together with anecdotes, reminiscences, repartee of America's greatest and most brilliant men. The work is full of "logic on fire." In its 4,500 pages are represented the best spoken thought of the nineteenth century, in every field of eloquence. The 80 superb photogravure portraits of the great speakers represented in the work, are themselves eloquent-speaking in every line and feature of achievement, research, thought and strenuous effort. They represent men who have swayed nations, electrified great audiences, corrected grave abuses and contributed to the welfare, the happiness, the mirth and the greatness of our country.

If you want some excellent books for your library at greatly reduced prices, see page 389. Henry's Commentary, five volumes, Cruden's Concordance and Smith's Bible Dictionary, regular price, $17.50, you can secure for $7.00. Books by Drummond, Harnack, Speer, Watson, Foster, at greatly reduced prices; the Polychrome Bible at 99 cents per volume. The Helman-Taylor Co., 23-27 Euclid ave., Cleveland, are the advertisers, and they will fill your orders promptly.

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Easy to Slide.

Dean Farrar said recently that there never was a time when it was so easy for one to enter the Christian life, and that it was never so difficult to continue therein. It is the opinion among many Christian workers that the past few years have been years of special trial and temptation in their inner lives. Is it possible then that there are epidemics of temptation; that there are times when Satan organizes special campaigns. Elisha Gray in his excellent little three-volume work, says that a hailstorm is the result of a terrific battle between a large quantity of heated air rising into the regions of the colder atmosphere. The cold air threshes and crushes out the moisture and heat from the warm air and the lightnings are loosened by the struggle. These areas of cold air are met at different heights. Sometimes they are comparatively near to the earth. Has the area of doubt and carelessness, worldliness and un-Christlikeness settled down towards the earth, crushing out the warm faith and energy of some of the most earnest Christians?

Here is where the personal work of the pastor should appear. Preaching is not the most effective method in pushing back this coldness. Even the prayer meeting does not always overcome it. The old question, between man and man, "How fares it with your soul?" awakens the sleeper more effectually than anything else. In the present straining after large congregations, let us not neglect the sheep already in the fold.

Overworked Preachers and Laymen.

What a relief it is to a preacher to find in a congregation two or three well-developed, capable Christian workers. All the work of the church may be put on them. So many are unwilling and some of the willing show such a lack of interest, that the minister would rather do the work himself. Here is where applies to the preacher first, and then to the worker he overloads, the following editorial from the Christian Herald:

"Some religious people are among the worst tempered people of the day, from the fact that they have no rest. Added to the necessary work of the world they superindent two Sunday schools, listen to two sermons, and every night have meetings of charitable and Christian institutions. They look after the beggars, hold conventions, speak at meetings, wait on ministers, serve as committee-men, take all the hypercriticism that inevitably comes to earnest workers, rush up and down the world, and develop their hearts at the expense of all their other functions. They are the best men on earth, and Satan knows it, and is trying to kill them as fast as possible. They know not that it is as much a duty to take care of their health as to go to the sacrament. It is as much a sin to commit suicide with the sword of truth as with the pistol."

A Burning Illustration.

For a striking illustration of the evil of cigarette smoking, draw an outline of a boy, showing location of heart, lungs and brain. Show a cigarette in his mouth. Start at the end of the cigarette and put on with a brush salt-petre, tracing a line back through the mouth, into the lungs, burning an outline of the heart and then to the brain. When this is dry light the cigarette and the fire will follow the line of salt-petre. Experiment previous to trying it before an audience.

Vacation Home for Preachers.

John McNeill, the great Scotch preacher, has accepted the invitation of Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman to spend the month of August in this country. He will be present at the Winona Bible Conference which meets from August 17 to 27 at Winona Lake, Ind., and will speak every evening of the conference. Are you aware that from the profits of his Life of Moody, Dr. Chapman has built a beautiful preachers' home on the shore of Lake Winona, where preachers who receive less than $1,000 salary may be accommodated without charge, except for meals, I think? Write him and ask about it. His address is West End avenue and Ninety-First street.

Extemporaneous.

Giving his popular lecture on C. H. Spurgeon at Witney a few days back, the Rev. Dinsdale T. Young told an anecdote of the great preacher which he heard a short time ago at Manchester, and which had not, he thought, so far appeared in print. Having to attend a large meeting at Manchester, and being at that time very low in health, Spurgeon was unable to get any idea of his speech previous to starting on the journey, and relied on making preparations in the train, but feeling so unwell he was unable to get his

mind to work, and found himself at the meeting without a single idea of what to speak about. In the hope of help, he turned to a brother minister on the platform beside him, and asked him what he should speak about. The minister thinking Spurgeon was joking, suggested that he should speak about the multiplication table. Judge the minister's surprise when Spurgeon rose and said he proposed to speak to them on the multiplication table as it applied to the Church. He should, he said, take three points: (1) Multiplication by addition; (2) multiplication by subtraction; and (3) multiplication by division, and from this made a splendid speech, delighting the audience.—British Weekly.

"Ignorant Faith Better Than None."

The Associated Press quotes from Dr. Lyman Abbott's recent address to the Yale divinity students as follows:

"The most pathetic thing I see nowadays is people crowding to Christian science meetings. What do they come for? Is it for the music or oratorical efforts? I learn that there are no such inducements. I am told that they read the scriptures and also read selections. Why then do they flock to that cult? Because somehow in the heart of these congregations is a strong and big faith in the living God. An ignorant and misguided faith? I think so. A superstitious faith? I think so. But, young men, an ignorant faith is better than a religion without any faith at all in it. The living church is the church of faith. Witness the power of the primitive church, led by illiterate apostles for the most part. They had not oratory nor music, no such inducements as are offered today.

"I read the papers and learn what the minister is advised to do to attract people. Have your smoking room, your reading circle, your stereoptican, if you like, but to see the churches turned into clubs makes my heart ache. These are not the magnets to draw people. The high church movement in England is growing. Dwight L. Moody, a man without critical education and murdering the king's English, drew throngs because he believed in the forgiveness of sin and the fatherhood of God.

"You come to your breakfast table, not to study a page in the cookbook, but to eat food. The country is advancing in prosperity. There is no room in America for the preacher who dares not speak the truth or for the unconsecrated preacher who looks for the big salary. Only for him who has the courage of his convictions and who dares to speak the truth and nothing else."

As to the clause concerning big salaries, we quote the following from the Northwestern Christian Advocate:

"Those who are despairing because of the rampant commercialism of the times and because of the dominance of mammon will find an antidote in some facts lately come to the surface. Rev. F. J. McConnell, pastor of the M. E. church in Ipswich, Mass., at a salary of $1,100 a year and a parsonage, has declined a call to the pastorate of Madison avenue church, New York, at a salary of $5,000 and a house. Rev. Dr. Burr, the Baptist minister at Newton Center, at a salary of $5,000 a year declines a call to the Fifth avenue church, New York, at $10,000. This latter is the church which is attended by the Rockefellers. Rev. Russell Conwell of the Philadelphia tabernacle refuses to accept an offer of $39,000 for six months' lecturing in Australia. Evidently there are some men still alive who are not after the dollar first, last and all the time.

"Nature's Miracles," by Elisha Gray, inventor of the telephone, consists of three volumes of familiar talks on nature and science. The explanation of the wide difference in the causes of hail and rain, the fact that many rain storms never reach the earth, the chapter on clouds, are worth the cost of the books alone, but these facts are from two of the hundred or more chapters. More interesting and restful than fiction, and creates in one a worshipful thoughtfulness of the One who is the key to nature and science. It is a treasury of scientific illustrations. Three volumes. Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 49 East 10th St., New York. 60 cents per volume.

"Don't was'e yoh time talkin' 'bout yoh neighbors," said Uncle Eben. "Yoh neighbors is probably talkin' 'bout you, an' you kin look aroun' foh yohse'f an' see how much good it's doin' 'em."—Washington Star.

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A DELICIOUS DISH.
As soon as served, drop a berry spoonful of Strawberries on top of the Ralston Breakfast Food; then add cream and sugar.
The most delightful delicacy imaginable, and the reason
Ralston Breakfast Food
is the only cereal that blends with strawberries and other fruits, is because it's the whole of Gluterean Wheat, grown under climatic conditions that impart to it a distinct flavor not possible for the more common run of breakfast foods to possess.
A FREE SAMPLE FOR YOUR GROCER'S NAME.
PURINA MILLS,
"Where Purity is Paramount"
804 GRATIOT STREET, ST. LOUIS, MO.

HOW TO MAKE A WORKING CHURCH.

SUGGESTIVE HINTS, METHODS AND PLANS GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

Third Paper—Second Series.

Success is more largely the result of industry and tact than anything else. To succeed a man must have a definite object in view—he must determine how much he wishes to accomplish—the measure of success desired. This fixed, then he must organize his resources and concentrate his powers, allowing no waste nor friction at any part or place. A man who works without a definite measure or purpose in view accomplishes but little, if anything. Economy is the worker's safeguard. No matter what his resources are, without economy they will be scattered to the winds. Economy here is used in its broadest sense, and means to husband and organize and systematize everything belonging to the worker.

How many pastors there are who work without any fixed purpose or plan, influenced and controlled by circumstances! We have sometimes heard such a careless worker in a spirit that approached boasting announce that he never planned anything. His subsequent assertion that he left all to the leading of the Spirit seemed to us presumptuous, if not blasphemous. Success in God's kingdom as in the affairs of the world is not an accident but a sequence—the fruit of wise forethought, careful planning and patient, intelligent toil.

"The pastor of a church," says Rev. Dr. Thwing, "holds to it a twofold relation, that of preacher and of chief executive officer." The preaching which should be devoted to the promotion of Christian character is of supreme importance. But the executive work of the pastor, broad and diverse as the work of the church, is in importance second only to preaching. His chief purpose is to develop the activities of his church as a Christian institution. He is, therefore, to plan methods and to suggest lines of Christian service; to stimulate energy; to adjust work to worker, and worker to work. He is to unite individuals into cooperative labor. He is also to attempt to allot to each member some specific and individual Christian service. He is to work through workers. Yet he should be ashamed to spare himself. In a word, "The truth of Christ he is to know, the duty of Christ to do, and the commendation of Christ to endeavor to receive."

Anent the inquiry which has been going the rounds of the press, "Shall we shoot the old preacher?" we want to say: "A preacher never gets old as long as he grows." Youth and growth are closely related. No congregation tires of a growing man, and growth largely atones for frequent mistakes and blunders. The preacher grows spiritually by personal contact with Christ; he grows in his sermons by hard systematic study, prayer and faith; he grows socially by constant and sympathetic intercourse with his people; he grows on all lines and in all respects by consecration and devotion to every interest committed to his care; thus he grows in usefulness and power, regardless of the years which crown his life. Then success is not a thing of caprice, but the result for which the full equivalent has been paid. "If any man will lose his life he shall find it."

Our mission as we conceive it, in this Department of Methods, is to suggest ways and means, outline plans, describe methods which may aid the pastor who earnestly desires the largest measure of success to the accomplishment of that end.

In some sections, especially in rural districts, the approaching summer months offer the most favorable time for special revival efforts. We give some suggestions from the experience of one of the most successful evangelists in this country.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A REVIVAL.

These directions contemplate a union of all the churches.

Organization.—The first condition of success in special evangelistic effort in any community is that the ordinary work of the church shall be laid aside for the time, and that all meetings, except the Sunday morning preaching services and Sunday school sessions be discontinued until the close of the special services.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The pastors are to form themselves into a general Executive Committee to supervise the work of all sub-committees, arrange the time and place of all meetings. The evening

meetings should be held in the most central part of the town, and all the other services in the most centrally located churches. The pastors and the Executive Committee are to appoint five committees, each having three members, as follows:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,

who are to arrange for all the expenses of the meetings before they begin, if possible. By assessments on the churches represented, or by private subscriptions.

COMMITTEE ON ADVERTISING,

whose duty it will be to thoroughly advertise the meetings through the medium of the press, as well as by cards of invitation, bulletins, banners, street cars, cards in store windows, before the meetings begin, and afterwards by invitation to special meetings.

Arrange for reporters to be present at all the meetings, and if they are not, then see that the press is furnished with full reports of each meeting.

If possible, select a successful business man, accustomed to advertising, as chairman of this committee, that the merchant and manufacturer's plan and purpose, thrift and drive for success may be gotten into the human side of the work of saving men, working as though all depended on us, and then trust as though all depended on God.

COMMITTEE ON CANVASSING.

Divide your town or city into districts and have canvassers visit every house, store, factory and surrounding farms. Let them distribute a neatly printed invitation to the meetings, and when possible have them give a verbal invitation and a word of exhortation as well as the printed one. Only efficient workers should be selected for this work, which should be done at least one week before the meetings begin. Special meetings such as "Young People's," "All Day," "Men's," etc., will be held during the series, and there should be special cards of invitation for them. A thorough canvass should be given to each.

COMMITTEE ON MUSIC.

Select a good leader, organist, and a large chorus choir, and begin at once to practice together. Pledge the members to attend all the meetings. Be sure to have a sufficient supply of hymn books, for chorus and congregation.

COMMITTEE ON USHERS.

Select one gentleman and two ladies for every sixty people your hall or church will seat. Provide each with a badge with the word "Usher" printed upon it. To the ladies a strip of white ribbon with the word "Assistant." Then select one of the best known and influential workers in town for chief usher and he will choose his own assistant chief usher. They are to have the full control of the ushers and assistants under the direction of the leader. They should also be distinguished by badges of a different color.

TO THE PASTORS.

We need not say that the benefit your church will receive from this united effort depends largely upon you. Plan and work as if it depended entirely upon you. Arrange all missionary, financial, social and other not distinctly spiritual affairs of your congregation so that no appointments can by any possibility conflict with the meetings.

Notify your people at once and repeatedly that you expect them to arrange their social, business, domestic and other arrangements so that they can attend all the services, afternoon especially, and give their time to definite Christian work.

As far as possible, get your church ready by holding consecration meetings (members committed to prayer at least three times daily), getting the people into an attitude of devout expectancy. Preach concerning revival at least two Sabbaths before the time appointed.

Select audience workers with tact, sympathy, kindness, and earnest patience to go through the congregation when invitation is being given and persuade the awakened to go to altar or inquiry-room, remembering that a person who rises for prayer is already three-quarters won.

Altar or inquiry-room workers who are versed in the scriptures, mighty in prayer, and who will offer Christ as the remedy for every want or doubt or sin, and urge an immediate confession of their conversion, should be carefully chosen.

We have recently closed a three weeks' meeting which resulted in a general awakening of the people and the conversion and reclamation of many and the material strengthening of all the churches which cooperated. In the preparation for this meeting and in the conduct of the services these suggestions were adopted, and as we have said proved their wisdom and efficiency by yielding most satisfactory results.

The pastor who himself conducts his meeting in his own church and with his own people will find many of the suggestions most helpful.

A Plan for Church Organization.

By Rev. Thos. A. Stubbins, Victoria, Ills.

AN OUTLINE.

I. THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH.
Those under 15 years of age.

II. THE TEMPLE BAND.
Those over 15 and under 30 years.

III. THE TEACHERS' AND WORKERS' BAND.
Those over 30 and under 70 years.

IV. THE PISGAH BAND.
Those over 65 years.

I.

THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH.

Luke 2: 22. And when the days of her purification were accomplished they brought him (Jesus) to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

Luke 18: 16. Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

We note from these Scripture references

that (1) Jesus was born into the Jewish church, and (2) Jesus accepts little children, why not the church? Therefore,

1. All children baptized by the church, presented by the parents, and all children who join the Sunday school or other junior departments of the church, shall belong to the I. Band, known as the Children of the Church.

2. They shall be considered as church members and granted all the privileges that are usually accorded to those not adult members.

3. A principal shall be elected by the church who shall have general charge of this department.

4. The first Sunday in June shall be known as Natal Day. On this day a service shall be held suitable for children. On this day children shall be baptized and those who are old enough shall promise to attend Sunday school regularly and strive to learn more about Jesus and to serve him to the best of their ability and knowledge.

Note.—The reception of children by the church shall be only with the approval and permission of parents, and no child is barred from church privileges because of refusal to join on Natal Day.

II.

THE TEMPLE BAND.

Luke 2:42, 46. When he (Jesus) was twelve years old, ***46v. they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers both hearing them and asking them questions.

1. All who are over 14 or 15 years and under about 30 years shall belong to this Temple Band.

2. The second Sunday in June shall be observed by the church as Decision Sunday. On this day a special service will be held and any in the first division who have reached the required age can join this second division by accepting the covenant of the church and acknowledging previous baptism or receiving baptism at this time. All this band shall on this day repeat anew the church covenant.

SUGGESTIONS.

1. Those who join this band shall for two years belong to some form of a catechetical class.

2. They can after this instruction join the Christian Endeavor Society.

3. As far as possible, all who are over 22 years shall enter a Bible Club, which will make a systematic study of the Bible to prepare its members for the duties of teaching, using some such scheme as that prepared by the American Institute of Sacred Literature.

III.

THE TEACHERS' AND WORKERS' BAND.

Luke 3:23. And Jesus himself when he began to teach was about thirty years of age.

1. All those who are about 30 years of age and under 65 or 70 years shall belong to this band.

2. They shall be ready to teach in the Sunday school, to help raise finances and to fill such offices as they may be asked to fill.

3. The third Sunday in June shall be observed as Consecration Day, when all who have reached the required age in the second division shall join this division by accepting again the covenant of the church and thus consecrate themselves to the work of the III Band. All of this division shall repeat in concert the covenant of the church, thus renewing their obligation to the church.

IV.

THE PISGAH BAND.

Deut. 3:27. Get thee up into top of Pisgah and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold with thine eyes.

1. All who have reached the age of 65 or 70 years shall belong to this band.

2. They can if they desire give up the active duties of the III Band.

3. The fourth Sunday in June shall be known and celebrated as Pisgah Day. All who have reached the required age shall on this day accept again the covenant of the church thus renewing their obligation to the church. The service shall be suitable for old people who have a near view like Moses of the promised land, but unlike him in that they may enter in.

NOTES.

1. All who refuse to change from one division to another at time specified shall be subjects of prayer and wise counsel for one year, if they still refuse they are dropped from the roll.

2. Every year each member should express in some way that he accepts anew the church covenant, if he persistently fails to do so he is dropped from the roll.

BENEFITS OF THE PLAN.

1. Compact organization, man accomplishes most this way.

2. Children grow into the church and its duties, like Christ, but they are free to do so or not as they choose.

3. Unworthy or indifferent members take their names from the roll by their own actions.

Note by the Editor: The plan as suggested by Dr. Stubbins has in it first of all the merit of originality and as he presents it is worthy of consideration. For the young people especially it might prove most helpful in bringing them to make definite choice on "Decision Sunday," and the provision for their instruction is wise, indeed. The plan, if carried out in all its details, would result in a thorough organization of the church. The chief difficulty, as we see it is in meeting the fixed age requirement. To illustrate our meaning we quote the following from The Church Economist:

"There is such a thing as being too complete and comprehensive in your church printing. A prominent church not many miles from New York now finds itself in a peck of trouble from this very cause. Recently it published a year book, which was really a very handsome and complete volume, but in the endeavor to make the work as comprehensive

(Continued, page 416.)

Der Gemeinde-Vorstand

ladet Sie sammt Familienangehörigen freundlichst ein, zu folgenden Versammlungen:

Jeden Sonntag im Jahr:

Sonntagschule 9:15 Vormittags.
Gesang und Predigt:
Sonntag morgens 10:30,
Sonntag abends 7:30.
Deutsche Schule:
Samstag Nachmittag 1:30.

Sie sind frei, Jedermann ist herzlich willkommen.

L. J. Brenner, Prediger.

Popular Services

Cheerful Singing

No Religious Formalities

A Hearty Welcome

Begins at 7 P. M.

Lasts about one hour

Modern Crucifixions

TO BE DISCOURSED BY

Frederick B. Greul

IN THE

....FIRST....
..BAPTIST..
..CHURCH..

ON THE

Sunday Evenings of February, 1901.

20

FEBRUARY 3. **The Crucifixion of the Bible.** Who does it?

FEBRUARY 10. **The Crucifixion of Self.** The Ex-R. C. priest, W. J. A. COUTLEE, Worcester, will tell the story of his conversion.

FEBRUARY 17. **The Crucifixion of our Girls.**

FEBRUARY 24. **If Christ came to Waltham, would he be crucified again?**

Eine freundliche Einladung

Ergeht hiermit an Sie sammt Familiengenossen folgenden Versammlungen beizuwohnen:

Sonntags —
9:15 Morgens Sonntagschule.
10:30 " Predigt.
6:45 Abends Jugendversammlung.
7:30 " Predigt.
Mittwoch, 7:30, Erbauungsstunde.
Samstags, 1:30 Unterricht, frei.
Freier deutscher Kindergarten, jeden Dienstag von 9 bis 12 Uhr.
Frl. M. Baer, Lehrerin.

Im Auftrage des kirchlichen Vorstandes,

Geo. C. Ehrenfrank, Prediger,
109 Berry Strasse.

Frl. Julie Steenken, Dolmetscherin.

Deutsche Methodisten Kirche, Ecke 7ten u. Berry Sts.

Dear _____ 21

Will you kindly arrange to meet me at the Church on _____ *for a conference? I will be at your service about* _____

Frederick B. Greul

A Personal Invitation 4

"Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our maker."—*Psalms.*

Is extended to you to attend the Sabbath and Social Services of our Church. You will be cordially welcomed; your presence will help us, and we will try to do you good.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—*Bible.*

WASHINGTON METHODIST CHURCH,
ELLISON & COOK PASTOR.
WASHINGTON, GA.

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASBURY PARK, N.J.

THIS CARD WILL 4 INTRODUCE TO YOU 22

WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE

First Congregational Church Sunday School

OF ASBURY PARK, N. J.

Being absent from home for a brief period and desiring to remain in attendance on the Sunday School, we have given this card of introduction to you. Please extend the hand of welcome and grant the privileges of your Sunday School to a fellow member.

SECRETARY.

Welcome 1

We are glad to see you among the worshipers in our Church, and if you are not a regular attendant elsewhere we extend to you a very cordial invitation to make this your Church home. It would give our Pastor pleasure to meet you at the close of this service, and our members to become personally acquainted with you.

DECISION CARD 23

"Choose ye THIS DAY whom ye will serve." *Joshua xxiv: 15*

God helping me, I do here and now receive Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and determine to follow Him as my Lord to the end of life.

Signature .....

Address ..... *Date* ..... 190 .

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

My Friend:—

Jesus waits time flies death urges. God's time is NOW. May the Lord lead you to accept Him without one day's delay, to your eternal happiness. When you can conscientiously sign this card, do so, and hand to the Pastor.

---

3 I am interested in the subject of religion and am concerned for my soul's salvation.

Pray for me I should be glad also to have the Pastor's counsel and help.

Name _____

Address _____

Return this to the Pastor and he will gladly give you all the help in his power

---

INFORMATION CARD. 2

On the lines below please write name of any one who may be sick, in trouble, or upon whom you, for any cause, think it would be well for the Pastor to call.

Name _____

Address _____

YOUR NAME

A COVENANT. 24

UNDER the conviction that I am a sinner in need of salvation, I hereby set my hand to this solemn covenant in which I accept the Saviour, Jesus Christ, as my own personal Redeemer. I will, by God's grace, be loyal to Him, till in death He receives me unto Himself. I cast in my lot with God's people and desire to live in Christian fellowship with them. I am now ready to confess this my faith unto the world by uniting with the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE COVENANT, and in doing so I pledge myself—

1. To an earnest endeavor to conform my daily life to God's word:
2. To cultivate habits of piety:
3. To attend diligently upon the Church Services:
4. To make myself useful in the Church:
5. To give "as the Lord hath prospered me" to its support.

Signed _____

LOUISVILLE, KY., 189

Specimens of Church Advertising, to which reference is made in the Department of Methods. Reduced to one-half size.

as possible the editor included a table showing the baptisms of members for a long series of years. This table has brought consternation to certain lambs of the fold, and has developed a storm center which makes life a weary road for the statistician. Further comment is unnecessary to those who have expert knowledge on the delicate subject of ladies' ages."

Let us add that we have known men who were as "touchy" about their age as the most affected "old maid."

A PRIZE OFFER.

For the best "Plan for Church Organization" sent in before August 1st we will give a Bagster Bible containing the "Travis Reference Line System for Bible Study," properly inserted and all ready for use. A handsome, useful prize.

We reserve the right to publish any or all the plans submitted. The decision will be made by a committee of three, consisting of pastors from three denominations. Plans that have been operated with some degree of success preferred. Address

REV. ELLISON R. COOK,
Washington, Ga.

A NEW METHOD OF CHURCH WORK.

Some time since the Methodist Tract Society asked Rev. Clarence True Wilson, D. D., pastor of the church at North Pasadena, of the Southern California Conference, to write for them an account of his efforts to interest the little folks in tract distribution. The following is the account given, which I am glad to commend to the consideration of pastors everywhere, as opening the way to a new method of church work that should be both widely applicable and very effective:

"I have been asked to write my method of tract distribution. The old way was to scatter a thousand tracts with the hope that a dozen persons would read them. My method sends out a dozen or two of tracts with the certainty that a thousand persons will read them. Another problem which pastors and other church workers must solve, is how to make the Junior League a success. The secret is found in enlisting the Christian children in the Lord's work.

"At the close of my Junior meeting I give to each child worker a tract, with the understanding that one week from that hour the roll will be called, and each one will report the number of persons who have read the tract, and bring forward to the table the list of names and addresses of the readers. Some little prize of book or paper is given to all who secure a certain number of readers during the week. Usually I present a Hymnal with notes to the one who secures the highest number. Our cheap edition of the Hymnal only costs twenty-five cents, when purchased in quantities, and is greatly appreciated by the children who have thus won a copy.

"No one will refuse to read a tract from a little boy or girl. Sometimes the entire household gathers round to hear the sweet message read. Boys and girls who thus engage in the work learn their tract by heart from hearing it read so many times. In three churches, at Seaford, Del., at Sea Cliff, N. Y., and last winter at North Pasadena, Cal., revivals of far-reaching influence owed their inception to this work under my pastorate. It has been helpful in preparing for every revival with which God has blessed my charges. It enlists the active co-operation of all the children of the church. It reaches every class in the community. It is the quickest way I have found of making announcements, disseminating missionary, temperance, or doctrinal information, or of pointing out duties to non-churchgoers. For example, one week during the rainy season here, I selected that exquisite little tract by Miss Frances R. Havergal, published by our Book Concern, 'Why I Go to Church on Rainy Sundays.' The following Sabbath morning it rained. In other years there would have been no service on such a day. The morning congregation was not less than on the Sunday previous. The explanation came in the Junior meeting in the afternoon, when the roll call brought the names of more than twelve hundred people who had read the tract during the week.

"I here give a single Sabbath report. The tract was 'How to Make Your Pastor Succeed,' by Bishop Fowler. Fourteen children received copies of it. The roll-call brought out the following facts: A little girl brought forth the names of two hundred and two readers. Four boys had more than one hundred and twenty each. Six children had more than one hundred readers. Four secured more than seventy-five readers. Only one fell short of fifty. You will see that these fourteen little workers found in a single week about sixteen hundred interested readers of that wonderfully helpful tract. I believe that all but two of the fourteen children know the tract by heart.

"I originated this plan ten years ago. Every worker I have told of it has commended it. As an effective means of tract manipulation I have not heard of its equal. I therefore commend it to all as a practical means of employing sweet childhood in the service of the Lord."

The Pastor in the Sick-Room.

By Rev. Austen T. Kempton, M. A.,
Fitchburg, Mass.

In our holy calling we are the followers of Him of whom it was said, "And He had compassion on them and healed them." Our ministry is to one of the most difficult and at the same time the most expectant class of people to whom we go. Difficult because of the rules and regulations of the sick room, and also because the minister hardly knows just how far he may go in the matter of religious conversation without offending those whom he desires to reach and help. But as nearly as I can remember in my own limited experience, there have been more offended and disappointed because the minister did not go far enough, than because he pressed the claims of Christ too earnestly. A minister has just buried a child from an irreligious home instead of the minister of the denomination to whom the family were nominally attached, because that pastor visited in that home during the days of sickness and did not carry enough religious con-

versation and prayer into that home to satisfy even those worldly parents. They did not want him to bury their child when it died, he had told them so little of the home beyond when he had come to see them. There was a clear and needed lesson in that for me and for many another minister, too, possibly. The sick ones are the most expectant class, because the minister is usually a welcome as well as an expected visitor during sickness, and also in the fact that all sick people think more of the next world than they do when they are well. And they want some helpful conversation on that subject without betraying it too much themselves. So let us quietly and thoughtfully and gladly seize on the opportunity that has come to us and as soon as we know of any one being sick put that call on the rush list, "to be made at once, no matter what happens." There is great gain in this plan to the sick person and to the minister. So apply it. I am very careful to find out the sick ones outside of the church roll. They are even more appreciative of a call than the ordinary member who thinks that the pastor must come to see him any way. That is his due. Go to see the member, of course, but be sure and go to see the other sick one too. There is rare opportunity of making him a life-long friend of Christ's if now, while he is sick, Christ's minister keeps near to him and gently leads him through the many perplexing thoughts that come to him now that he is sick and quiet, and has time to think.

About the first important thing is to find out who is sick and where they live. That ought to be easy, the doctor finds out, because they send for him. Not so with the minister. There is both a help and a hindrance in this. It shows how delicate a service the sick room visit is, and is much more highly appreciated when the minister has found out for himself and makes a voluntary call, instead of waiting to be sent for, as if it were a business of a worldly sort. Let the pastor over and over again impress on his deacons, for bless their dear old hearts, they will forget, and probably have not been rightly trained, any way; impress on them that they must notify him of every case of sickness in their neighborhood. Then have a few districts, and a good, wide-awake woman to take the responsibility of each district. Let them have addressed postal cards and send the pastor one every case they find. Speak of wanting to know of all cases of sickness from the pulpit, and if the people find that you really mean that you want to know the cases, and will call on them and do your work well, they will take pleasure in keeping their pastor informed. A minister that can make a good sick call is a noted man, in a very quiet way, of course, and he will be sought by many outside of his own parish and church, and even by Catholics, who while the priest makes the preparation for the grave, and on the outside, will turn to this Protestant man of God to help them prepare to meet the God in whose presence they will shortly stand.

Now that the minister has found out a number of homes where there is sickness, let him start out. Ministers ought not say as I have heard so many say, "I just hate to make sick calls." Even if he does not enjoy it, he ought to have grace enough to do it cheerfully as a servant of Christ, and have sense enough not to give himself and his weakness away, and spoil the call before he has made it. I know a minister that used to dread the sick calls as his greatest cross. But he saw his rich opportunities and as he prayerfully improved them, grew to enjoy them and the value of his calls went up higher and quicker than any Standard Oil stocks ever dreamed of going. I know another minister, good fellow too, but he groaned so over his sick calls, that he was by no means a welcome visitor to the sick. Let us be more careful. A lot of good ministers are spoiled by those dear sympathizing sisters, that condole out of the depths of their hearts (what would we really do without them, though), with their pastors over every bit of work and experience that is not wholly pleasant. Let us not hurt our kind comforters, but let us be careful they do not hurt us, and spoil us for the strenuous side of our work. Let the people know that your door bell is as free to them as the doctor's is in any time of sickness, and especially in the time of death. Tell them you will consider it a privilege to come to their homes and sit with them while the spirit of their loved one is passing from them. Let the sick one know that you will come and hold their hand and pray with them and for them when the Angel of Death hovers near. Let the timid, frightened sufferer know that you will go with them to the operating table and while they are unconscious will stay near by and pray and watch and comfort those who wait. There is a service here that few (far too few) ministers are fully equipped to acceptably carry through. It is a side of our ministry that we will do well to develop. There is far more call for it from both Christian and worldly people than we may have thought. The better we are prepared for it the more will we be wanted for such holy service.

It is a beautiful and Christlike thing to go to the bedside of the sick, and give comfort and encouragement to the heart and mind, even if we cannot heal the body, as our Great Physician did. But this we can do—we can do what is in our power and He will richly bless us in the doing of that, and do through us more than we had ever expected. I have known many to say, "Since my pastor called and talked and prayed I have been much more comfortable." Does that not come very near to the art of healing that we think we possess nothing of? I think it does. Several years ago a poor victim of temper and wickedness shot himself near the heart in the presence of his wife and child. The same team that came to hurry the doctor to the man called at his request for a minister, and I happened to live next door to the doctor and was called to go. The driver said he will be dead before I can get you there. But the man was living when we reached him. He begged the doctor not to touch him. He thought he was dying and turned to me. I sat down and took his hand in mine and talked with him. I told him I hoped he must not go into God's presence with his own life in his hands. There was a little hope that he could live. "Then if that is

so, pray, sir; ask God to forgive me this awful deed and let me live." I knelt and prayed with him. In less than five minutes he fell into a sleep and when he awoke an hour after, the doctor said, "You will live." To this day that man and his wife declare that the prayer was the means of his recovery. This much is certain—from that moment he began to recover. That man came as soon as he was able and listened to every word that I spoke from the pulpit. I believe God uses his ministers as He needs them. Many a minister will say, "I would gladly do more of this, but I do not know how, and I don't know how to learn." Get a good doctor to let you go and make some calls with him. Take him into your confidence. Tell him you want to know how to win the love and esteem and confidence of the sick and those in the home for the service of Christ, and if you have picked your man well, he will tell you some things that will help. Observe him with the sick and how he allays their fears and cheers and makes them all feel better for his visit. So do thou, thou follower of the Great Physician. Doctors have told me that some ministers do their patients lots of good and that they are glad to have them visit all their sick, and, yes, they have said the other thing too.

Now let us think. How do we like to have callers do when we are sick. This will give us some good hints. We know who we liked to see come. We know who we were glad to see go, and hoped that if for no other reason, our recovery might be so rapid that we would be well before they called again. What made the difference? So learn that when you go to the home of the sick you show the difference.

A sick call should be brief. The sicker the person the briefer. Many of the best sick calls are made without sitting down. A minister must be as wise as a doctor. Lay your hand gently on the man's brow instead of shaking his hand and his body too, especially if he is suffering. A touch is comforting. "And he touched him." It means more than we probably know. A physician always takes the hand in his or lays his hand on the head. Say a kind, cheerful, hopeful word. Say a Christian word. Do not go out of that chamber till you have spoken the message God sent you in there to speak, and don't stay long either. Say this or something better of your own. "I am sorry to see you suffering so today. Ask Jesus and He will help you bear it, for He bore a great deal, too. Ask Him to make the future all right, and He will, for He loves you better than any one on earth. I will step to the door and enquire for you any way tomorrow, and I know I shall find that you are better." All through the long hours of suffering will that sentence repeat itself to that man. He will think about you coming tomorrow to inquire for him and it will do him good. It is more than mere sentiment; "'Tis sweet to be remembered," it is a fact, and to no one is it sweeter than to the sick.

A very helpful thing in making sick calls is to judiciously use a few flowers. Many C. E. societies give their pastor some bouquets to use in this way. Some churches have a small fund that can be thus used. But even if the minister has to take the money out of his own pocket there is gain enough to more than offset the cost, many times over. If you do not take the flowers with you when you go, send them with a kind message written inside. If you are too busy and cannot possibly get to that home today let your assistant, a bunch of bright flowers, make the call for you. Believe me, they will do the work well for you too. Then you can go to the chamber and stay there twenty-four hours in the day by that bunch of flowers, when possibly you cannot be admitted bodily. There are a score of ways of getting into a sick room other than walking in. I have made some of my best calls when I have staid out and sent a messenger in, a note or a dish of fruit or a copy of the New Testament. The marked copy. Light, so that they can hold up and read a moment at a time. They probably have plenty of Bibles in the house, but none of them may be half so well adapted for the sick room as they are for the pulpit. Like some ministers. Take them a Bible adapted to the sick bed. Or possibly a sweet poem or a nice picture. Anything that is good and wisely chosen.

Now, it is only fair to touch a moment on a hindrance or so. Sometimes the doctor is most determinedly opposed to any one calling. More often it is the trained nurse, who thinks because she is trained she must now train every one else, with or without their consent; that little difficulty does not matter. These difficulties must be overcome courteously and pleasantly, "for the man of God must not strive," and it may be necessary to go a great many times before you can storm the fort and take that trained nurse by storm, or better still, by calm. But let us say this for her—when once you have won her, and in her great judgment you have not done any harm to the patient she has so faithfully stood guard over, you have a powerful and helpful ally. Then, too, you are hindered by having all the family file in and stand in funeral rows and gaze on you and listen. Again must we in gentle manner follow the example He has set us. "And He put them all out of the room." On a second visit it will not be offensive, if said in the right way, that it will excite the sick person less if no one comes in the room while you just speak to the patient a moment and have a word of prayer. Even if they are in the next room and hear it all just the same, you and the patient are both freer. For the family and friends are not so intently set on doing the patient all the harm they can and spoiling the effect of this visit and ruining all your prospects for another, although the appearances are decidedly against them. Forgive them. Sins of omission. I do not mean by all of this that I think any minister ought to force himself into the sick room. No, nor force his call on anybody. But he will find that if he thinks he is needed there, the people will think so, too. It is too good an opportunity to be lost without a good try for all there is in it.

Then another very delicate part is that which falls to many a minister. The confidences and secrets and promises of the dying

or those that think they are going to die. This is sacred business. Go into it carefully. Do all you can for the sick one. Very often it will be you, my brother, that must tell the sick person that they cannot live. You will need all the grace you can get to do it. But do it. Do not let any one else do it if they want you. Then say now if you have anything to say or any message to leave I will take it and give it for you. Break such a message as that softly, of course, but let the sick one know that it means that they cannot live. It will not be the shock and horror that many a time we think. People know when their end is near very often better than we think they do. There is, it seems to me, a growing custom of not telling the patient that they must die. Some doctors will not allow them to be told anything else than that they are getting better and are going to live. It is the minister's duty to let the people know the truth when they are being told the false in this, possibly, as well as in other things. But this must be done carefully. It is in the presence of Death and Eternity that the minister must stand true and brave, and stand as a captain. I knew of a minister breaking the message in this delightfully delicate manner. The family wanted the woman told. The doctor did not. The minister came. He took in the situation. He went in softly and after a few moments said, "I have a dear mother in Heaven and you may possibly reach there before I do; will you take a message for me to her." Do you wonder that even the message that Death was near had no shock when broken in that manner?

Now comes the question, shall the minister ever go to visit in the case of an infectious disease? If it is possible to get in, yes. The doctor goes. The nurse goes, the Board of Health go, and if the sufferer dies the undertaker goes. Shall the Man of God stand by and let these worldly servants all file in and minister to the sick, dying, and even the dead, and he not go near the patient? What does that promise mean, "He shall give His angels charge over thee." Also, "They shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." Does it not mean that God will take care of those who go into danger to do His work and to carry His message. But some one will say, "The minister must not expose his family or the public. Does he expose his family any more than the doctor does his? Does he expose the public any more than the doctor who goes from house to house all day? Satan has laughed many a time at the ease with which he has kept Christian ministers from doing their duty. If it is not possible to get to see the patient in any other way, go to the doctor and tell him about how you feel in the matter. Take all the precaution possible, then go, fearlessly and looking to God for His blessing and His protection. A good rule to apply in a case like this is the Golden Rule. What would you think and how would you feel if, when you lay sick of some dreaded disease, a Christian minister broke through the rules of custom and came in and talked with you and prayed for you? Of course you would be an enemy (?) of his ever after? Then think what it will mean to that man shut off from all the world. You are needed as much as the doctor. You will be no more apt to be taken with the disease than the doctor, nor as likely. When the sick one is dead, go to the house or the grave and stand outside if need be and offer a prayer. Even if not one of the loved ones can be present, let them have the Christian satisfaction of knowing that their loved one had a Christian burial, even if they died of a contagious disease. Go to the hospitals. Speak to others than just the one to whom you go especially. There are many hungry hearts there, much more so than your sick friend. For no one calls on them. A rare chance is yours at such a time. Improve it. Then how will they watch and hope for your return. So go again.

Let me urge you, my brother minister, visit the sick. Hunt them up. Call again and yet again. Sometimes say when they ask you in, "No, thank you, not today; will be here tomorrow, and will go in then. I just came to inquire and bring these flowers." Go tomorrow and see what kind of a call you can make. Many ministers do not call on Monday. Better still be ready to call on any day and any hour. "Be instant in season and out." Sickness does not wait for us to get in the mood to call. Go, and get in the good mood after.

This is sacred, holy work. Christ did it. We must too. It was a pleasure to Him; let us not shrink from it. We need to go prepared, but He can, even as we go, give us the preparation. Listen to the words of the Master, "I was sick and ye visited me."

Fitchburg, Mass., April 19, 1901.

Our Page of Card Forms.

No feature of this department has called forth more expressions of appreciation than our page of forms used in church work. We note that the idea has been promptly adopted by our only contemporary. An enthusiastic subscriber wrote us recently that "This page alone was worth the subscription price of the magazine."

INVITATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT IN GERMAN.

By special request we this month reproduce two cards printed in German. The printing is neat, and the card is attractive. We commend the use of picture of the church on all church printing, especially in cities where there are many churches. It affords material aid to strangers in finding the church and familiarizes the children and regular attendants with the appearance of their church. The cuts on the cards are exceptionally fine.

THE "NEW IDEA" CARD SERIES.

Forms: Welcome Card, No. 1; Information Card, No, 2; Request for Prayer Card, No. 3; Invitation Card, No. 4; described on page 369 May number of Current Anecdotes.

That which makes these cards of special interest and value to all our readers is the fact that they are adapted for use in any church any where. By investing only one dollar a pastor gets the new air cushion stamp outfit,

and can then order these cards in any quantity and in a few minutes have beautifully printed attractive cards, containing name of church, location and name of pastor. That you may get the idea the spaces on Cards 1, 2 and 3 are left blank, and on Card 4, "A Personal Invitation," in lower right hand corner you will see space filled in with the air cushion stamp. Corresponding in color of ink and general style of the printing, with the impression as perfect (by reason of the air cushion) as could be secured on the finest press, up-to-date card forms are brought within the reach of any pastor, no matter how small his church, or how limited his income. Let us add also that with this air cushion stamp a pastor can print his own letter heads, envelopes, postal cards, etc. Send all orders or inquiries to Pastors' Supplies Co., Washington, Ga. Cards sold at uniform price, 50c per 100. If samples are desired send 2c stamp. See page 369 May Current Anecdotes, for full information.

AN ATTRACTIVE ANNOUNCEMENT.

We have received no neater, or more tastefully designed and printed forms than those sent us by Rev. Frederick B. Greul, D. D., of the First Baptist Church, Waltham, Mass. The arrangement of the card No. 20 is unique, and the original and quite unusual theme catches the eye and rivets the attention. Such a card will be read, every word. The matter is not crowded and yet note how much is on the card. Dr. Greul is evidently a past master in the art of writing effective church advertisements.

THE SPECIAL REQUEST, NO. 21.

We give another of Dr. Greul's forms. Script type if properly used is always chaste in appearance. This card is used for calling workers together at stated times for conference. We are hoping to give our readers an article from the doctor's pen in an early number, telling us how he does things.

FOR USE DURING SUMMER VACATION.

Very soon our people will begin to scatter, going for the heated term to the various resorts in all parts of the country from the mountains to the seaboard. Oh, how many Sunday school pupils and church members drift away during their vacation. Any method that will hold the young—keep them in remembrance of the church at home, or lead them to seek out and attend the Sunday school or church most accessible during their summer tour and outing, is to be heartily commended. The form No. 22 used by the First Congregational Church Sunday School of Asbury Park, N. J., meets this demand most admirably. To each pupil leaving for the summer is given one of these cards of introduction properly filled out. The reverse side of card contains blank for record of attendance, name of Sunday school, date, etc., and place for the signature of the superintendent. The pupil preserves his card and on his home coming returns it to the secretary. If he has been faithful the card will show that he has attended Sunday school every Sabbath. A prize or some public recognition would prove helpful in inciting to faithfulness.

DECISION CARD, NO. 23.

In very many churches and Sunday schools Decision Sunday has come to be recognized as an important and permanent institution. We are impressed with this form, which we reproduce because the call to decision is now. These cards judiciously circulated by the pastor among the children, young people and non-church members of his congregation, would, we believe, help many to a definite decision.

COVENANT CARD, NO. 24.

The last form on the page is "A Covenant" used by Rev. Dr. J. R. Collier, of the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Louisville, Ky. Taken all in all, this is the most comprehensive, best form we have received. We do not see where the card could be improved at any point.

Clergyman's Co-operative Correspondence Club.

For mutual helpfulness and exchange of printed matter and plans.

Rev. Ellison R. Cook, Secretary,
Washington, Ga.

(Note.—Address all communications for this department to the secretary, above address.)

OUR SPECIAL OFFERS FOR JUNE.

Send 50 cents for year's membership in 4C Club and the secretary will send you postpaid that invaluable aid, Thompson's Pastors' Pocket Directory for Systematic Visitation.

$3.00 VALUE FOR $2.00.

We want you with us, and hence make the following exceptional offer:

"Travis' Reference Line System of Bible Study" (see page 317, April Current Anecdotes), complete.

Old Testament Study	60
Life of Christ	60
Apostolic History	60
Pastor's Pocket Directory	20
100 New Idea Invitation Cards	50
Membership "4C Club"	50
	$3 00

All for only $2.00. This is rare value and the offer will not stand after July 1st.

Address REV. ELLISON R. COOK,
Washington, Ga.

On page 370 May Current Anecdotes, in "Special Offer for May," the price of Travis' Reference Line System Bible Study and year's membership in 4C Club, appears $1.00. It should have been $1.80, as will be seen by reference to article on page 317, April Number. It has been quite an expensive error for us, as we have filled all the orders which have come in.

We will have an interesting article on Advertising Church Services in the regular advertising columns of secular papers. We would be under obligations to anyone who will kindly mail us copies of papers containing such advertisements.

BANKS' SERMONS.

Vol. II. INCORPORATED WITH CURRENT ANECDOTES. No. 6.

The Secret of a Radiant Personality.

"And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone."—Exodus 34: 35.

"And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."—Acts 6: 15.

"And his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."—Matthew 17: 2.

Christ has made it clear that it is our duty to be radiant and full of light. "Ye are the light of the world," is Christ's deliberate announcement concerning those who are his followers. None of us have a right to live darkened lives. It is not only our privilege, it is our duty, and we are under solemn obligation to live lives that shall be so cheerful and bright, so radiant with hope and courage, that the world looking on shall inquire the reason, and when they come to know it give glory to God.

I wish to call your attention to these three cases of supreme radiance in personality, with the hope that from them we may learn the secret of the radiant life. The first is from the story of Moses. For forty days Moses had been on Mount Sinai with the Lord. He had talked face to face with God and the radiance of heaven was reflected from his face. When he came down the mountain and appeared before the people, though he was not conscious that there was any change in him, the people could not look upon his face, it was so radiant with the divine glory.

Now in Moses' case it was his divine associations which had given him this radiant personality. Here then is one of the secrets of the illuminated life. Associations will have their influence upon us. There is one kind of a diamond which after it has been exposed for some minutes to the light of the sun will when taken into a dark room emit light for a long time. The human heart is like that. The man who associates with God, who keeps in the divine fellowship of Jesus Christ, whose heart and soul rise in communion with all good and pure spirits, will gather the heavenly light, and it will shine forth from him in the walks of life.

In one of the old palaces the spaces between the windows of one of the rooms are hung with mirrors, and by this device the walls are made just as luminous as the windows, through which the sunshine streams. Every square inch of surface reflects the light. Our natures may be like that. If we are completely consecrated to God, walking in perfect fellowship with Jesus Christ, with all selfishness cast out, there will be no part in darkness anywhere, and the whole realm of the soul will be ablaze with moral illumination which will make the personality radiant and glorious.

Some traveller says that the brightly colored soil of volcanic Sicily produces flowers of brighter tints than any other part of the earth. So it is true that the soil of Christian hearts, from which all the dullness and darkness of selfishness and evil has been expelled, a spiritual soil that is bright with the radiance of love and hope and faith, will produce deeds of brighter tint and sweeter fragrance than any other heart-soil possible to man.

Henry Varley tells the story of Sybil, a negro slave, whose mistress said to her: "When I heard you singing on the housetop I thought you fanatical; but when I saw your beaming face, I could not help feeling how different you were to me." Sybil answered," Ah, Missus, the light you saw in my face was not from me, it all came 'flected from de cross, and there is heaps more for every poor sinner who will come near enough to catch de rays."

It is almost impossible for us to overestimate the power of associations on life. If we are to live bright and radiant lives our associations must be taken into account. An English writer recently related this incident: About a year ago a friend gave to a young man a lovely picture, and asked him to hang it up in his room for a year. The recipient of the picture was a lively young Oxford undergraduate, who cared much more for having a "good time" than he did for his studies, and who was not over particular as to the character of his good time. Calling upon him at his rooms one day, the writer found this picture hung in a prominent place, but surrounded by an incongruous medley of low sporting prints and questionable pictures. The young man himself did not seem to be conscious of the glaring contrast, but cheerfully called his visitor's attention to the splendid picture which had been given him. Six months passed away, and the writer called again, and was startled by the change. The picture still hung in its old place, but its low companions had vanished, and their places were filled by other pictures in harmony with its beauty and purity. The face of the visitor expressed surprise, and in answer to a look the young man was quick to speak of the change.

"You see," he exclaimed, "I couldn't leave them up with that. The contrast was too dreadful. I didn't see it at first, but I suppose looking at the picture opened my eyes till I did see it, and then, I tell you, those cheap prints came down in a hurry! And it was

the same way in putting up new pictures. That one set the standard, and I knew I couldn't have, and didn't want, anything that wasn't in harmony with it."

Now that is the supreme glory of association with Jesus Christ. If we open the door of our hearts to Christ and he comes in and sits at the head of our table, his presence sets the standard for the guests at our soul feast. The rest must be in harmony with him. If you would live a radiant, glorious life, let Christ become the central figure of your affection and friendship, and then there shall group about him only those radiant, and hopeful, and beautiful spirits that are in harmony with him.

Our second picture brings before us that young and picturesque first martyr for Christ, Stephen. I have not time adequately to paint that wonderful picture. It is a court scene; the judges are grave and dignified men, full of bigotry and prejudice against the new religion. The mob gathered about are vindictive, and hate everything holy and good; and there before the council is Stephen, a young man with the glow of youth upon him, but a far more brilliant glow than any mere physical or youthful spirits or youthful strength can give. It is the glow that comes from a perfect loyalty to Jesus Christ. He does not seem to see the mob or the judges; his eye is on the throne of God; it pierces the veil, and he sees his glorified and risen Lord, and he bears witness to him with an utter fearlessness that astonishes and overwhelms the men who listen. As he thus loyally witnesses for Christ, those prejudiced men, who look on his face, are compelled to acknowledge that it is like the face of an angel.

It is a tremendous truth that as life goes on the human face becomes the dial-plate of the soul into which men may look and tell the time of day in character. As Dr. W. F. Crafts has said, the face is a bulletin-board that constantly indicates the working of the heart. Every day we see how anguish of heart "disasters the cheeks" and furrows the face, and writes upon it the epitaphs of buried hopes; every day we meet faces tramped as hard as a highway by the hoofs of pain and oppression, and sorrow as well as joy engraves its story on the countenance. Sin writes its record also on the face. There are places you may go in this city and look into faces that seem to contain, as some one has said, "the ruin of the ten commandments"—faces that hurt you more than a blow, faces where "from the eyes the spirit wildly peeps," faces like petrified vices, not a finger-touch of God left whole upon them—and you will realize that vice as well as misery makes its trademark on the visage while it ravages the heart. Great soul-artists in fiction always recognize the fact that we are to see the mind in the face. Dickens makes even the dogs to lead their blind masters up side alleys to escape the cruel face of Scrooge, while on the other hand the little boy in the churchyard looks with tears into the face of "Little Nell" as her countenance is being transfigured by approaching death, to see if she is already an angel, as the neighbors have said she will be soon.

The teaching of all this is that whoever masters your soul will in the end make your personality bear witness to him. You cannot escape the grip of your master. If sin is your master, in the end you will be his living moving monument. But if Christ is your Lord, and from the profound depths of your soul you are loyal to him, out from that whole-souled loyalty to Christ there will come a glorious light on your face, and your whole personality will become radiant and bear witness to the Lord whom you serve.

In our third picture we have the Christ accompanied by his three most intimate friends, Peter, James and John. They have gone up on the mountain, either Tabor or Hermon, and there while Jesus prays the fashion of his countenance is altered, and the astonished disciples, looking on, behold the face of Jesus shining like the sun and his raiment white as the light.

Now in this case we have the radiance of a perfectly pure heart. Moses wore a veil when coming out from the presence of God, so that the people might look upon his face; and so Christ during all his earthly life was veiled, that he might live with men without the awful glory of his perfect purity overwhelming the people with whom he associated. As some one has said, the transfiguration of Jesus was not a miracle, but a witness of the abiding presence of Christ's divinity: his whole being shone. If he had been outwardly true to what he bore within him he would have been seen always with his glory unveiled; it would have been about him in the manger at Bethlehem—transfigured Babe! In his home at Nazareth—transfigured Boy! It would have shone about him during his ministry in Galilee—transfigured Man! And, at the last, on Calvary's cross—transfigured Sufferer! For our sake Christ veiled the outward glory that he might live among us as one of us; but for a moment on that mountain top, with these close friends about him, the inner glory shone forth in his face, and the disciples fell to the ground before the radiance of that light.

Here we have, then, three characteristics of a radiant personality, all of which are within our reach. A pure heart, divine associations, and a whole-souled loyalty to Jesus Christ. I say all of these are within our reach. If the heart is hard and selfish and sinful, bring it unto God at the mercy-seat, and he will take out of your breast the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. Surrender yourself to do his will, to obey him, and he will cleanse your heart of all unrighteousness. With sin banished you shall realize the promise of Christ, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Divine associations are also possible to us. We may always reach Christ and heaven through the gate of prayer. Down in Asheville, North Carolina, there is living a remarkable old saint, with a face as black as ebony, who is known as "Uncle Barney." A few weeks ago Uncle Barney was in attendance on a "quarterly meeting." The presiding elder brought up the question of family prayers, and he began with one of the brethren and went

round the circle, asking each brother if he had family prayers, and requiring him to tell something about the worship that was daily held in his family. At last he came to Uncle Barney. Now Uncle Barney, like Paul, is an old bachelor, and so he said, "I cannot have family prayers, seeing that I have no family. But," continued the old man with a shining face, "when I get up in the morning and wash my face, I say, 'O Lord, wash my heart and keep me clean of sin this day.' And when I put on my clothes I say, 'O Lord, clothe me today with the white garments of righteousness.' And when I put on my shoes, I say, 'O Lord Jesus, get into these shoes with me and make me to walk in thy paths every step I take this day.'" No wonder that this old man, a humble old black cook, has an influence which pervades the whole community, white as well as black, and is wherever he goes a radiant testimony for Jesus Christ.

And so the perfect loyalty is possible to every one of us. Do not allow yourself to be discouraged because you are naturally timid and easily thrown into a panic. God can make the inner courage all the more glorious as it shines out through natural weakness. There is a moral courage which is far greater than physical courage. The Duke of Wellington once sent two officers on service of great hazard, and as they were riding, the one turning to the other saw his lips quivering and his cheeks blanched. Reining in his horse he said, "Why, you are afraid." "I am," was the answer, "and if you were half as much afraid as I am, you would relinquish the duty altogether." Without wasting a word the officer galloped back and complained bitterly that he had been sent in the company of a coward. "Off, sir, to your duty," was the Iron Duke's reply, "or the coward will have done the business before you get there." And Wellington was right. There was a physical timidity, perhaps the result of a highly wrought nervous organization, but there was a lofty regard for duty which bore the officer above his fears to triumph. Associate with Jesus and meditate upon his love, commune with him, keep your heart pure in his sight, and there shall grow in your soul a moral courage so sublime and splendid that no trial or difficulty of life shall ever overcome it.

After all, everything that we have said is only saying in different ways, from different standpoints, that the secret of a great and glorious life is in Jesus Christ. Our preparation, our fellowship, our reward, is all in him. Paul's promise comes back to us, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Wise and happy, then, are we when we can sing with Henry Lavely,

"Enough for me to know
That Christ is God indeed;
Enough for me to feel
He shall supply my need.

"Enough for me to kneel
Close to his bleeding side;
Enough for me to seek
Him for my peace and guide.

"Enough for me to cast
On him my every care;
Enough for me to wait,
And all his crosses bear.

"Enough for me to hear
The tender Shepherd's voice;
Enough for me to trust,
And in his love rejoice."

Christ's Bid for a Tired World.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11: 28, 29.

Tissot, the artist, tells a very interesting story of a vision which came to him in a cathedral in Paris, and he gives this as the reason for his wonderful career as a painter of the Christ and the scenes of his life. He tells us that he was in Paris painting a series of pictures representing the pursuits of the society women of the city of fashion. At that time it was fashionable among the rich and the gay to sing in the choir of some great church, and he wished to make a study for his picture, "The Choir Singer." With this purpose in mind he went to the Church of St. Sulpice during mass, more to catch its atmosphere for his picture than with any idea of worship. But he soon found himself joining in the devotions, and as the Host was elevated and he bowed his head and closed his eyes, there came before the inner eye of his imagination a wonderful picture that thrilled him to the very soul. It seemed to him that he was looking at the ruins of a castle. The windows were broken, the cornices and drains lay shattered on the ground; cannon balls and broken bowls added to the debris. And then a peasant and his wife picked their way over the littered ground; wearily he threw down his bundle that contained their all, and the woman seated herself on a fallen pillar, burying her face in her hands. Her husband, too, sat down, but, in pity for her sorrow, strove to sit upright, to play the man even in misfortune, and then there came a strange figure of a man gliding toward these human ruins over the broken remnants of the castle. His feet and hands were pierced and bleeding, his head was wreathed with thorns, while from his shoulders fell an Oriental cloak inscribed with the scenes of the "Fall of Man," the "Kiss of Judas." And this figure, needing no name, seated himself by the poor peasant, and leaned his head upon his shoulder, seeming to say, more by the outstretched hands than in words: "See, I have been more miserable than you; I am the solution of all your problems; without me civilization is a ruin." This vision pursued Tissot after he had left the church. It stood between him and his canvas. He tried to brush it away, but it persisted in returning. Finally he painted his vision. He interpreted this vision as a call to him to leave the gay butterflies of fashion and set himself to

paint the Christ who has redeemed the world and has power to give rest to the souls of men.

Our text is Christ's great appeal to the burdened and the tired, and that makes it an appeal to the great mass of men and women. Men everywhere are groaning under their burdens, and need comfort and inspiration and fellowship to make the burdens light and the yoke of life easy. I suppose that Christ may have been led to make this exclamation by noting the heavy burdens which the poor people of his day were compelled to carry on their heads or their shoulders. And Christ gave expression to the great conviction of his soul that he was to make the burdens of men lighter, and how wonderfully that promise has been realized. Wherever Christ has been preached and any people, in any country, in any age, have come to recognize Christ in any degree, in just so far have the burdens been lifted from the shoulders of men. There was not a king in the world in the days of Jesus who could have as many comforts for bodily health as very poor people may have now in our towns and cities. No longer is the water carried in a leathern bottle on the heads of the women; no longer must food be cooked over a smoking fire built on the ground in the center of wigwam or camp. No longer must the clothing be made by hand. Pass on from one department of toil to another, and you will find that in every field of burdensome labor the quickened brain of Christian lands is lifting the burdens from the shoulders of toiling men and women. And this is to go on until the bitterness is taken out of the dregs of the cup of labor. In Jesus' day nearly all the working people in the world were slaves; but age by age the Carpenter of Nazareth has been the strongest personality to which appeal could be made in the struggle for better wages and shorter hours and a nobler life in every way for the workers of the world. Jesus Christ has given a dignity and a nobility to labor and he will yet lift all the burdens that bear with cruelty and oppression on the shoulders of men.

But sin is the great burden-maker for the human life. Sin it was that enslaved men in the days of old, and sin it is that holds them in bondage and burdens them now as does nothing else. The devil promises pleasure and happiness in sin, but he is false, and John Ruskin tells the truth when he says, "No man ever enjoyed doing wrong since the world began." There is a momentary intoxication in sinful pleasures, but there is a bitterness and a remorse and a stinging regret which follow, which makes it impossible for the soul to find rest.

Robert Burns spoke from experience when he said:

"But pleasures are like poppies spread—
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed!
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts forever."

Lord Byron spoke out of the fullness of bitter reality when he wailed:

"My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flower and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone."

And these experiences are typical of the results of sin always. In the end it lays heavy burdens on men's shoulders, heavy loads upon the heart, which it will not touch with the tip of a finger.

Many young men and many young women are drawn into sin by the promise of good fellowship. The devil tells them that sinners are more friendly and more given to good fellowship than are Christians, and so like the Prodigal they give themselves over to friends who are by no means steadfast when the day of trouble comes. Some of you will recall how Thackeray tells us of young Mr. Warrington, the Virginian, who, after living in a gay and fashionable circle in London, and winning and losing large sums of money at the card table, at last found himself in jail for debt. He did not take it seriously at first, and in a gay fashion he sent notes round to his friends, fondly imagining that each would be eager to liberate him from his imprisonment. But he was greatly astonished to receive notes back from all of them, giving the very best reasons and excuses why not one of them could give him a penny. And Thackeray was true to life.

There is an old story told in Persia of a Persian prince who came among the people in the Great Hall, clad in an ordinary dress; and, to his astonishment, he found that every one, even the servants in the Hall, hustled him about, insulted him, and abused him. He withdrew rapidly from the Hall, and went and put on his princely garments and returned, and then every one was bowing before him, and he said, with a bitter truth, "You should not say, 'My lord,' to me, but say, 'My lord coat,' for it is the coat you seem to respect and not the man." And every prodigal has found, like the Prodigal in Christ's story, that the friendship and fellowship made in sin, no matter how fascinating and intoxicating at the time, result only in heavier burdens and more cruel heart-aches.

Now to all such burdened hearts, who have sought happiness and satisfaction in sin and found only disappointment, Christ comes offering a divine rest of soul. No man or woman is so burdened but Christ will keep his promise to give perfect rest if you will come to him. Do not try to ease your burdens by any self-righteousness. Bring them all to Christ. St. Augustine tells us that one day in Milan, when his sins burdened him until he could stand it no longer, he went out alone into the garden behind his house and threw himself down in great trouble of soul. He seemed then to hear a voice shouting the words, "Take up and read! Take up and read!" As he reflected, it seemed it must be the oracle

of God to his own soul, "Take up and read." If that were true, there was only one book to read, of course, and so he went into his room and opened the New Testament and read the words, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." And in Christ he found rest so sweet and beautiful that he afterwards exclaimed: "Too late, too late, have I loved thee, O thou ancient and most fresh Loveliness." So it will seem to you if you will open God's Word and read, or if you will hearken to it as I speak it to you. There will come to you such a peace, such a rest of forgiveness and confidence of soul, that you will marvel that such loveliness could be in the world and you utterly oblivious to it for so long.

"Ah, but," some one says, "there is a yoke and a burden in Christianity." Yes, indeed! To become a Christian does not mean to escape loyalty and service. But what kind of a yoke is it? It is not a yoke that chafes the shoulder, it is not a yoke that indicates ignoble servitude. It is a yoke that binds us to the noblest and holiest endeavor, it is a yoke which promises for us the most honorable and glorious career that can possibly come to us. I was reading not long ago of the supreme happiness that had come to a young lady who was a student of art and had shown great talent in the pursuit of her studies as a sculptor. This young woman had finally been received as a student by the famous St. Gaudens. Now she was only a student, a disciple, of the great sculptor. To be that meant hard work, self-denying toil and exertion. It meant the putting herself into a yoke more severe, so far as earnest work was concerned, than any commonplace teacher would exact. But the opportunity was received with hearty congratulations on the part of her friends, and it was regarded as a high honor and a noble privilege. The honor and the privilege made all the burden of exertion seem light and made the yoke easy. So in the higher realm of the soul Christ is the greatest soul-sculptor in the universe. Here is the one perfect Teacher, the one absolutely perfect Expert in what it takes to make manhood and womanhood. To be under him, to be instructed by him, to have his gracious teaching, his inspiration, his encouragement, means to us the possibility of creating the noblest and most beautiful character that is possible. If it is a great thing for a young sculptor to be a disciple of St. Gaudens, how much more wonderful a thing it is for a poor sinner who desires to become noble and holy and good to have a chance to bear the burden and wear the yoke of a loving discipleship to Jesus Christ. Yet that is your divine privilege. Do not delay about accepting it. Press into the kingdom this very hour!

Christ's Answers to the Hard Questions of Life.

"And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions." 1 Kings 10: 1.

The Queen of Sheba ruled over one of the richest and most beautiful lands known to the earth in her day. It was situated between the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea in south-western Asia, and so fertile and beautiful was it that the poets have ever called it "Araby the Blest." It is the land that Thomas Moore has described as a country,—

"Whose air is balm, whose ocean spreads
O'er coral rocks and amber beds;
Whose mountains fragrant by the beam
Of warm sun with diamonds teem;
Whose rivulets are like rich brides
Lovely with gold beneath their tides;
Whose sandal groves, and bowers of spice,
Might be a Peri's paradise."

Into this beautiful land, rich and splendid, and which was ruled over with such wisdom that it was called "the happy land," wonderful rumors had come of the great Solomon and his marvellous wisdom. Finally the Queen of Sheba determined to make a pilgrimage into the north and see Solomon and all his glory. But one of the great things that moved her heart was an irresistible longing to get an answer to some hard questions concerning God and her relation to him. She had heard that Solomon was wise not only concerning the riddles of human life in this world, but that he knew God and could answer those great problems that she had tried in vain to solve.

We may see suggested in the pilgrimage of this great queen, by far the greatest of her day, that there are some questions of the heart that can never be silenced by worldly things. Here was a woman who was a queen over a great nation, famous for her beauty, her wealth, and her power; she lived in a marble palace, in a land that was a dream of beauty and riches; countless millions owned her queen, but all these could not silence the great questionings of the soul, and she was willing to undertake any pilgrimage if she might thereby find an answer that would give her peace. Let us learn the lesson. No amount of worldly success, however abundant or splendid it may be, will give peace to the imperious questioning of your heart. The rich fool of the Gospel, who planned to feed his soul on the things he raised in his fields and crowded into his new barn, was not a greater example of folly than are the men or women of today who imagine that they can quiet the soul by any degree of worldly success or any amount of worldly riches.

We do not have given to us, definitely, the questions which the Queen of Sheba propounded to Solomon concerning the name of the Lord; but there are some fundamental questions which men have been asking in every land that we are sure she must have put

to him. They are questions which are just as interesting to men today, and, thank God, Jesus Christ can answer them all to our complete satisfaction.

The first questions, I imagine, were, "Can I know God?" "Can I commune with him?" "Can I ask him questions and be answered?" Solomon in his younger life had had such experience in prayer and communing with God that he could have answered such a question to the amazement and joy of his royal visitor. In all literature there is nothing sweeter or more beautiful than the story of that prayer of Solomon at the opening of his reign as king. He had spent the day in sacrifices and offerings to God, and in the night following God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask what I shall give thee." And Solomon replied: "Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead. Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" And the Lord replied to Solomon and said: "Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like."

But great as was the wisdom of Solomon, he could not have given this queen so satisfactory an answer as Christ has given to us. He has taught us, in the wonderful prayer which we call the "Lord's Prayer," how to draw near to God and know him.

Closely connected with this was another question which has not yet lost its interest, "How can I make my peace with God?" And that is a question which Christ has answered for us more perfectly than Solomon could have done. This is a question which men have been asking in every age and among all people. There have been three answers to it. The first is the answer of the heathen, who seeks to appease God by his own acts. The second is the answer of the Pharisee in Christ's story, who thanked God that he was better than other men. But Christ's answer is in the picture of the poor publican who, throwing himself on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, cries out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Our Bible is largely given up to the answer of this great question. "How can a man be at peace with God?" But Christ has answered it beyond all cavil. His promise is that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Paul, speaking of Christ's answer to this question, says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Aitken, the English missioner, tells the story of a clergyman who some years ago was preaching on that text in the East End of London, and at the close of his sermon he invited any who were interested in religion to come and converse with him in the vestry. He was followed by an intelligent looking young man who said, "I am going to leave England in two or three days, and perhaps this is the last opportunity I shall have of talking with a clergyman. My father and I have had a terrible quarrel, and it ended in his turning me out, telling me never to darken his door again. I wandered up to London, but knew not where to look for employment. At last I found a berth as sailor before the mast, and before I go I want to ask you, 'What must I do to be saved?'" The minister endeavored to make the way of salvation as clear to him as he could. They parted, however, without there being any apparent change in the young man's spiritual condition, though he seemed to be awakened and much in earnest. Time wore on, and the incident had almost passed from the clergyman's mind, when one day a sailor called at his residence. "Do you remember," he said, "some months ago a young man coming to your vestry after the sermon you had preached on the words, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God'?" "Oh, yes, I remember it perfectly." "Well, he went on board the London, and he and I became great friends, because I am a Christian, and I soon found out that he wanted to be a Christian too; so we used often to have long talks over our Bibles, and used to pray together; yet somehow or other I could never get him to see things quite clearly. I suppose he was looking to his feelings more than to Christ. Well, then came the shipwreck, and that young man was told off by the captain, with myself and a few others, to man one of the boats. The boat was lowered and soon was crowded; but by some accident the poor fellow was left behind in the ship. We hardly knew what to do, for our boat was too full already. Besides, the ship was settling fast, and we were afraid of being dragged down with her. Yet we did not like to pull away. Then I heard him call me by name as he clung to the rigging; and he shouted across the water, 'Good-bye, mate! If you get ashore safe, inquire for the Rev. H. B., of Limehouse Docks, London, and tell him that here in the presence of God I can say at last, "Being justified by faith, I have peace with God through my Lord Jesus Christ."' As he said the words the ship gave her last lurch and he disappeared in a watery grave." There is no man or woman here but may find the answer to that great question to the soul's peace tonight.

There is one other question that I am sure the Queen of Sheba asked Solomon. It is the same question that Job asked: "If a man die, shall he live again?" No man or woman, however rich or powerful or great, can ever have real peace until that question is satisfactorily settled. Human philosophy can speculate about it, but it has no comforting answer.

The story is told that Seneca, the wise philosopher of his day, was on one occasion trying to console a lady who was suffering agonies of mind under a severe bereavement.

But all he could do was to suggest to her that she had better try as soon as possible to forget her trouble. She had, he said, good examples around her in the birds and in the beasts. They, too, love their relatives, but after a momentary spasm when they lose them they take life easily again; and, said Seneca, in doing this they show man an example which he would do well to imitate. But we all know what miserable consolation such philosophy is. Mental pain cannot be conjured out of a man by a philosophy which talks only of his dignity and can only make him comfortable at the cost of forgetfulness. How infinitely sweeter and more comforting are the words of Jesus to his disciples when they sit trembling under the shadow of the death of their Lord. "Let not your heart be troubled," said Jesus, "ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." How that takes the bitterness out of the thought of death and eternity! Christ is there, and he loves us, and he is fitting up a home for us; one by one our loved ones are gathered there, and some of these days we shall go home.

Henry Ward Beecher was once coming home from England. It was a very stormy trip and he was terribly seasick nearly all the way. But he was anxious to get home and was conscious all the time of exultation and joy because every hour was bringing him nearer home. The ship went into Halifax on a deep dark midnight. He could see nothing, yet the moment they came into still water he rose from his berth and got up on deck. As he sat near the smoke-stack while they were unloading the cargo, upon the wharf he saw the shadow of a person apparently going backward and forward near him. At last the thought occurred to him, "Am I watched?" Just then the person addressed him, saying, "Is this Mr. Beecher?" "It is," he replied. "I have a telegram for you from your wife." He had not until that moment realized that he had struck the continent where his home and loved ones were. There, in the middle of the night, and in darkness, the intelligence that he had a telegram from home thrilled him through and through with exquisite joy.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are all sailing home; and by and by, when we are not thinking of it, probably, the shadowy watchman whom men call Death, at midnight it may be, will call us by name, and will say, "I have a message for you from home; God waits for you." And if we have lived at peace with God and have our hearts in touch with him, it will thrill us through and through with heavenly joy to know that at last our ship has touched the heavenly wharf and, safe from all the storms of life, we are at home.

And yet I am sure that to some who hear me there is a haunting sorrow in all this, for you are conscious of your sin, and you know that if God were to call you now there could be to you no joy in the call; it could only bring you sorrow and despair. But, oh, I thank God that Paul was right when he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And though you may be the chief of sinners, as Paul thought he was, you may this very hour repent of your sins and find forgiveness for them in Jesus Christ and go to your home having peace with God.

Mr. Spurgeon once told the story of a man who had been a long while burdened in spirit. One night he dreamed that he stood at the gates of heaven, longing to enter; but he dare not, and could not, for sin had shut him out. At length he saw approaching the pearly gates a company of men who came on singing, dressed in white robes. So he stepped up to one of them and said, "Who are you?" And they replied, "We are the goodly fellowship of the prophets." And the poor man said, "Alas! I cannot enter with you." And he watched them until they had passed the gates, and he heard outside the voice of song as they were received with welcome. Cast down and troubled, he watched until he saw another company approach, and they too came with music and rejoicing. He said to them, "Who are you?" And they replied, "We are the noble army of martyrs." He said, "Alas! I cannot go with you." And when he heard the shouts a second time ascending within the gates, his heart was heavy within him at the thought that it was not possible for him to enter there. Then came a third company, and he detected in the van the apostles, and after them there came mighty preachers and confessors of the Word. He said in his heart, "Alas! I cannot go with you, for I am no preacher, and I have done nothing for my Master." His heart was ready to break, for they entered and were lost to his sight; and he heard the triumphant acclamation as the Master said, "Well done, enter into the joy of your Lord." But as he waited, he saw a greater company approaching. Among those in front he saw Saul of Tarsus, and Mary Magdalene, and the thief who died upon the cross; and they came streaming on. So he said to one of them, "Who are you?" And the reply was, "We are a company of sinners whom no man can number, saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, through the rich, free, sovereign grace of God." And this poor man, when he heard this word, exclaimed, "Thank God, I can go with you, for I am a sinner like you, and like you I will trust in the merit of Him who died on Calvary." So he joined their ranks, and was about to enter, but he said in his heart, "When we come there will be no songs; they will admit us, but it will be in silence, for we bring no honor to God; we have done nothing for him." But to his surprise the shouts were louder, the music more wonderful, than they had been before, and the hosts of heaven exclaimed, "Here are they who come to complete the number of the hosts whom Jesus bought with blood."

O my brother, my sister, will you not join that number? Bring all your sorrows, all your burdens, all your sins, all your hard questions to Christ. He alone can answer them for you and give peace to your soul.

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